

W O O D B U R Y:

O R, T H E

M E M O I R S

O F

WILLIAM MARCHMONT, Esq.

A N D

Miss W A L B R O O K.

I N L E T T E R S.

By the AUTHOR of the SUSPICIOUS LOVERS.

I N T W O V O L U M E S.

V O L. II.

In life how weak, how helpless is a woman!
So properly the object of affliction;
That heaven is pleased to make distress become her,
And dresses her most amiably in tears.

YOUNG.

D U B L I N:

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M D C C L X X X I.



W O O D B U R Y.



L E T T E R I.

From Mr. MARCHMONT to CHARLES
LEWSUM, Esq.

ABOUT eleven this morning, as I was reading the tragedy of Othello to my fair friends, and was just come to that part where Jago warns his noble general to "beware of jealousy," the servant ran into the room, and joyfully exclaimed, "Madam, ladies—he's come—he's come"—"Who, who?" cried Lucy trembling. The passion of surprise soon gave way to that of joy, for Templeman appeared. She flew into his arms; he clasped her to his fond bosom. Miss Hanmer next received his embrace. His person, I think, is the finest I ever saw; 'tis plain Lucy thinks so too.

At the sight of a stranger he started back; Miss Hanmer introduced him to me; had
G 2 she

She presented me with a draught of poison, I should have received it with transport, but the hand of a rival! O God, Charles, what horrors did the touch communicate to my soul! However, I stammered something; but whether it was understood or not, I will not venture to affirm. "My dear Jack, said Lucy, [yes, Lewsum, he was her dear Jack] I shall not forgive you for a long time, for having thus frightened me." "I fancy, Madam, said I, your resentment will not last long, if I may judge from your smiles." "Upon my word, Lucy, [mind that, Charles, how charmingly familiar!] had I acquainted you with my arrival, I must have remained at Dover whilst I dispatched an express to you. I staid no longer in London than to change my chaise, lest my return should be discovered, and without having taken more than four hours rest, since my landing, set off for Stoke; so eager was my desire to embrace you."

I found a sickness all over me, yet I would sooner have died, than my distress should have become apparent. I prudently made my retreat, and became a prey to the most exquisite distress; my health being in so languid a state, made my mind more weak than, perhaps, it would otherwise have been; I was, by my misfortunes, unable to fly from my misery. But alas! Charles, where could I fly, where her dear image, in the embraces of Templeman, would not intrude? But I was determined

determined to be no more a witness of them. In short, after a few hours painful reflection, I found myself really ill ; my head was all a chaos.

Miss Hanmer, for the Doctor had been two days from home, sent up to let me know that dinner waited. I excused myself, by saying I had letters to write, and in truth I had, painful as the task is, my arm remaining very weak, but it was some relief to my mind, to vent my complaints to thee. I ordered only a glass of water, and desired to be left to myself. I received the same summons to tea, my refusal brought Miss Hanmer to me : she was full of anxiety and fears, about me. I told her she must excuse me, which she could very well do, as her agreeable relation would supply my place amongst them. " My cousin's stay, Sir, will be but till tomorrow morning, when he is to meet my father on business. Lucy, and I, would have prevailed on him to prolong his stay, but in vain." " To refuse yours and Miss Walbrook's solicitations, does not accord with that politeness, which from his appearance, I should guess he was possessed of."

I heard him call, " Fanny, where are you? This saucy hussy, Lucy—" I heard no more ; she left me, not alone, no, ten thousand horrors haunted me. I passed the night a prey to despair ; the morning brought no intermission to my grief ; sleep lent me not her balmy comforts. I arose—saw Templeman depart,

but

but he carried not my sorrows with him. No *they* remained, *they* were faithful to me, when I was rejected by all the world but Lewsum. I must rest a few minutes, till I can proceed.

In Continuation.

I quitted my chamber, and went down to study philosophy and philanthropy, in Mr. Hanmer's library. I looked over twenty volumes, but read not a paragraph in any. A bible lay on the table, it was opened at the psalms; thus much my eye took in: "Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." I sat down revolving in my mind the lines; and exclaimed to myself, "Peace never comes, that comes to all." I had but one hope, one joy, and that is gone for ever.

Miss Walbrook, who I suppose must have heard the latter part of my speech, cried out in a theatrical tone:

For ever!

O who can bear to be a wretch for ever?

But upon my word, Sir, I am amazed to see you up early, and am glad to find you so well." My head was resting on my hand, so that I saw her not, when she spoke. She came before me, I turned my eyes from her, and sighed; "This attention in you, Madam, is obliging. Do you come with that
cheerful

chearful countenance to insult my griefs? If you do, you are gratified. If you pity me, I thank you, and will retire, as I am unfit for company, having been ill all night and have not rested a moment; I therefore came into this study to seek consolation, but cannot find it." I arose to go. "Pray, Sir, I beseech you, Sir (with her eyes brim-full) do not go; if you are ill, I will call Fanny to prescribe something for you." I was going. "Indeed you must not go; does your complaint lie in your head? take a little of this lavender." I sat down and sighed again. She sighed. "Why do you sigh, Miss Walbrook? I thought nobody had reason to sigh but Marchmont; you cannot feel his troubles." "Not unless," said she, "you think me worthy of having them confided to me." "Excuse me, Madam; not that I doubt your secrecy, but—" I stopped, "Indeed I would wish to be alone." She disappeared in an instant. Soon after Miss Hanmer came in, to prevail on me to come into the breakfast parlour. "Lucy is in tears, said she, nor can I guess the reason." I desired her to lead me to what place she chose, for that all were alike to me.

I took her hand and led her in; on my entrance, I saw Lucy leaning her head on the table, her handkerchief at her eyes; she wiped them, turned from me, and was leaving the room. "Nay, stay, Madam, if—

if—" "No, Sir, you shall not again remind me of the respect I ought to show you; thrice already this morning have you bid me quit you." "Well then—but now I intreat you stay." I seated her, and took a chair next to her. Miss Hanmer presented her with a cup of tea; she attempted to put it to her lips, but her trembling hands could not conduct it. I saw how much she was agitated, and took it from her. Her tears were renewed; I guessed they fell for Templeman. "Were Mr. Templeman a witness of this tender sorrow, how would his heart exult!" "How, Sir, said Fanny, my cousin exult in Lucy's tears?" "Yes, Madam, tears that fall from affection." She again attempted to leave the room, but I prevented her. Her grief increased. "Stay, Miss Walbrook, my imprudence no more shall pain you, your sensibilities are too exquisite when even his beloved name is repeated." "Very true, Sir, sobbed she." "Very true! said Miss Hanmer, what do you mean? Can't you hear Templeman's name mentioned without being thus distressed? It would fill his pretty wife with a thousand fears were it known." "His wife—His wife, Miss Hanmer, did you say—O Gods! Then who knows to what I am reserved!" I grasped her hand in agony, "Ah! my dear Madam, you weep, and will not forgive my petulance." I threw myself on my knees before her, "Miss Walbrook, I have not treated you with

with that tenderness you merit. Pity me, my head has been much disordered; let your eyes speak the pardon the tongue refuses, and I am satisfied." "Rise, Sir, you mistake, if you think you have offended me; how should you?" "You then have not that friendship for me, I flattered myself you had, if you are not hurt at the ungracious return I made to your goodness. Just before you entered the library, I had read that 'sorrow continueth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' Look kindly on me, my dear Miss Walbrook, and then shall I feel a joy indeed." I pressed her hands to my lips, she was not displeased. I then turned to Miss Hanmer, "My dear Miss Hanmer, said I, I beg your pardon for interrupting you, when you was saying something of Mr. Templeman's wife; his *pretty* wife, I think you called her, (I was dying, Charles, to have my doubts cleared up.) "He was very sorry, returned she, that you refused to give him your company; he fancied you had conceived some sudden disgust to him, but of what nature he could not imagine. I must intreat your secrecy for a while, for the little narrative I have to communicate. I bowed. "My cousin, Lucy, and myself, were at the same time pupils to my father; we looked on him as a brother, we were his sisters; he was an orphan, his fortune was considerable; after he had staid three years at Oxford, he spent one with us, before he set out on his travels. The last

year he has passed in Paris. For his agreeable talents he was universally esteemed; with the Chevalier de Beauville he contracted a strict friendship; his sisters were educated in a convent, they had liberty of drinking coffee with them often; the chief friend and confidante was an English lady of the name of Mansfield; her mother, a pious catholic, being determined to bring her up in her own principles, had placed her there; but she was so strongly prejudiced in favour of the Protestant faith, that all efforts to make her renounce it were fruitless. My cousin heard her story, was instantly inclined to pity her; he looked upon it as a glorious work, could he preserve the little heretic as she was called. They corresponded for some time; it ended in this, that there were no means so certain as sheltering herself in his arms. They found no difficulty in effecting her escape. The Chevalier de Beauville received her at the convent, and conducted her to the ambassador's chapel, where Templeman was ready to receive her. They were united, and he assures me he has never once had reason to repent. His Emilia is handsome, amiable, and discreet; the place of her retreat is not to be known till the mother can be brought to forgive them; and it is to solicit that pardon he is come over; her father's he hopes easily to obtain." I thanked her for the information. My scruples were all satisfied, and I once more tasted of happiness, if a
man,

man, circumstanced as I am, can be capable of it.

My mind, relieved of the most dreaded of evils, became, for a while, inebriated with the most rapturous hopes; for Lucy had wept at my unkindness: it makes me flatter myself she hates me not. For the future, let what will fall out, I will be more patient. What troubles did not my precipitate retreat from my friends involve me in!

Adieu.

MARCHMONT.

L E T T E R II.

To the s a m e.

Stoke.

“EACH man is man, and all our sex is one,”—my Lucy read.—“For heaven’s sake, Miss Walbrook, give me your opinion of that sentence before you proceed—Does your heart acknowledge no preference? or does your humanity extend to all alike?” “Humanity, Sir, is one of the noblest principles that actuates the human soul---it is the source from whence universal love---” “My dearest Miss Walbrook, no circumlocution, I beseech you. I asked not what was your opinion of *universal* love, but whether,” said I, affecting to laugh, “that portion of it, implanted by nature in your heart, extends equally to all objects, and whether you think, with the poet, that all our sex is one---” “Most certainly no, Sir;

Mr. Hanmer, and, let me see, said she---and paused---No; he certainly ought not to be placed on a list with you, Sir, and many others I could mention. His sentiments prove him to be of a species infinitely superior.” “You are a saucy girl,” said I, kissing her hand. “And you are *as* saucy, Sir, to take such liberties.” “Well then, said I, I acknowledge and reverence Mr. Hanmer, as much as one of his own sex ought; and, as well as you, pay the profoundest regard to his precepts: but be candid now, and tell me, with perfections so rare in a male creature, would you chuse to enter the matrimonial state with him, preferable to a man, suppose now, for instance, of *my* age, subject to all his sex’s faults and frailties? It is a plain question, Miss Walbrook, and requires not a moment’s hesitation.” She looked embarrassed. “Pray, Sir,” said she, recovering “herself, how long have you assumed the title “of Confessor? Has your late illness wrought this wonderful change in you? Have you received permission from his Holiness to execute so sacred an office? But my religion differs widely from that you have adopted, and obliges me not to confess, as it is not from you, holy father, I can hope for absolution.” “Yes, by heaven! said I, you shall have it, and be the sin on my head!” “If lady Fame, Sir, is not a tell-tale, your *own* catalogue is pretty voluminous, without adding *my* errors to them.” “Well then, returned I, you will

will not confess? Thence, I will conjecture, that you cannot answer me in a manner consistent with what you have just been saying. You never then can regard any man with tenderness, but Mr. Hanmer? he alone is the object of your affections! Happy man! I will let him know your sentiments." "O Sir, I refuse the obliging offer, you make me; he is already acquainted with them, and receives every mark of my affection, with the most unfeigned gratitude. This was said with an affectation of gravity that quite put me out. I snatched her hand, and looked tenderly upon her. "Ah, what is it I hear?" "Nothing but the truth, said she; don't you think I should shine in so respectable a character? Such a husband!—such a daughter! wherever we appeared, how my prudence would be admired!" "If you talk of prudence, Miss Walbrook, give me leave to suspect your love. Love and Prudence are guests that seldom visit the same mansion. I hope when you are happily united, you will not refuse my petition, should I make application to you, for your fair daughter: if I gain her consent, yours will not surely be denied. With what grateful joy shall we throw ourselves at your feet, to implore your blessing: you raise us to your maternal bosom, and, with a holy kiss, sanctify our union; and let this kiss, my dear mother, be the prelude to future expectations;" and unawares to her, I caught her round the waist and kissed her. My temerity was punished.

punished with a smart rap on the knuckles, with the book she had been reading. "*There*, said the proud beauty, blushing with indignation, this is a specimen of the manner in which I shall chastise your insolence." "With all my heart, said I, ten thousand times a day, provided I shall be thus rewarded." "Very well, Sir; till you can behave yourself with more respect, I shall amuse myself in the garden."

She looked not pleased; I could not bear to see her depart from me in anger. "Do not leave me, said I; I repent of my crimes. I am all submission and penitence. Let your good-nature smile at my impetuosity. Consider how incapable I am of procuring for myself the least amusement; I am not yet strong enough to bear the frowns of my friends; the longest life cannot repay you for all your unmerited goodness—and if, for one slight trespass, I should have forfeited your esteem, it would not be the least of the disappointments I have endured. Ah, Lucy, Lucy! I assume a gaiety, whilst my heart is torn with the most tormenting reflections; your, and your friend's attention have preserved a life, which, if deprived of your future friendship, is reserved to little purpose. It has no resource left but in that: yet, indigent, and renounced by my father, as I am, it is an honour I ought not to solicit; but goodness like yours will compassionate my sufferings. Miss Greville, you must be convinced

convinced was not the object of my love. No, My dear Miss Walbrook! my heart burns with the most pure and unalterable flame, for the most excellent of women—she is ignorant of my passion, nor will it ever be in my power, I fear, to make her an avowal of it; as my father's inhumanity has put it out of my power to place her in that state of affluence due to *her* merit, and *my* love; nor shall she ever know to what excess I have doated on her, from the first moment my eyes have beheld her."

During my speech, she had been standing; she turned her face from me, approached the window, and burst into a flood of tears. "Are you still angry, said I, or do you pity my unhappy situation?" "Indeed I do, sobbed she; my friends here, and myself, will do every thing in our power, to make your misfortunes sit light upon you; but ah! how weak our attempts will prove to calm afflictions like yours!" "They are already lightened, said I, by your kind commiseration; perhaps time may soften the heart of my obdurate father, but his pity may come too late; the mistress of my affections, unacquainted with my passion, may, long ere that, be the wife of another; it has been reported she is already engaged: think, oh think! my dearest friend, how truly pitiable is my condition!" "It is, indeed, Sir; but if the lady is of fortune, she will scorn all pecuniary

cuniary advantages, and generously make a resignation of it with her person, if she should be influenced by the same principles you are." "I am yet a stranger to particulars, said I, but be it either way I must be wretched; as my pride would not suffer me to receive obligations where I cannot confer them; and my love is too delicate and disinterested, to involve the dear object in penury and distress with me." My whole soul was transfused into my countenance, I was scarce able to support myself; I too had recourse to my handkerchief; ashamed of the unusual suffusion which obscured my sight, I remained unable to utter another syllable. She was not less affected than myself. Was it compassion—Was it love—that agitated her tender bosom? Could I but think it was the latter, Hope *would* intrude herself, and comfort me with the faint glimmerings of a distant happiness.

Before we were either of us enough recovered to continue the conversation, we were interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Hanmer, who was just arrived. His daughter came in soon after; Lucy withdrew. She declined coming down to supper, so I saw her no more that evening. Nothing after happening material, I shall here put an end to my tedious epistle.

As I am got so much better, I must soon talk of removing myself; I cannot think of longer imposing on their humanity. But, O Charles!

Charles ! How shall I tear myself away ; or whither shall I fly, where reflection will not pursue me ? I cannot come to town, so do not expect me : I suppose my father has industriously published my disgrace. To the practice of patience my future hours must be dedicated.

Adieu.

MARCHMONT.

L E T T E R III.

To the SAME.

SINCE an avowal of my sentiments in my last, my passion has gathered fresh supplies to feed it. My Lucy, contrary to the established maxims of her sex, now she is instructed in my misfortunes, endeavours, by every pleasing power, to mitigate the severity of my fate ; this kind condescension, when she thinks I am stripped of all worldly advantages, convinces me of the goodness of her heart. Whilst she beheld my fortunes in a prosperous state, her behaviour was that of reserve and respect ; but now all her forms are laid aside, kindness and compassion mark every action. If I sigh (an expression of grief that but too often escapes me) her lovely eyes manifest the soft sensations of her heart. What emotions of joy do I not then feel ? How ready are my thoughts to burst
my

my lips, and tell her that she alone is my soul's idol ; that the loss of all pecuniary advantages I should not deem worth a thought, were I to be assured of her tenderness. Yonder I see her, walking in the garden ; she is reading, her eyes not once thrown up to admire the beauties around her. Excuse me then, dear Charles, for a moment, if I endeavour to divert her attention to another object.

In Continuation.

The object that accosted her was not a displeasing one, if I may judge by the kind reception given him. At my approach she would have laid aside her book. " You do not look upon me as a friend, said I, if I interrupt your studies ; if you do not proceed I shall be under a necessity of retiring. Would you wish my absence ? will you not let me be a partaker of your pleasures ? As you have kindly partook of my troubles, dear Miss Walbrook, can you refuse me a share in your amusements ?" " Well then, Sir, said she, if reading is your choice, I present you my author ; and will, in the meantime, amuse myself with collecting a nosegay."

I took the book, tossed it at some distance upon a seat ; " There, said I, let the source of our present contention rest ; whilst you pluck violets, let me gather myrtle, and present you, as an emblem of my constancy to
the

the best—"She hastily slipped by me, so that she gave me not an opportunity of finishing my fine speech; and well for me she did, for I should have been confoundedly embarrassed; every wish of my heart was at that instant at my tongue's end. She soon made a pretty collection, and returned. "Here, said I, my dear Miss Walbrook, presenting her a sprig of myrtle, will you make an exchange with me?" "With all my heart," said she. "This myrtle then, Madam, let me entreat you not to regard as a shrub, but as an acknowledgement of that esteem and friendship I shall ever bear you; these lilies, I accept, as an emblem of the immaculate purity of your own mind; the crimson of these roses shall remind me of the streams I once saw flow from the source of all my hopes, all my wishes, all my desires. Think you, my dear Lucy, I ought ever to forget the most important event of my life?" "Yes, Sir, returned she, smiling, I think you ought not to cherish a passion that every day, you say, adds to your disquiet; ought you not rather to vanquish a delirium which in the cooler moments, I hope, for your future peace, you will treat as a chimera?" "Can you wish it then?" said I, with my whole soul bursting into my eyes, and looking upon her with all imaginable tenderness. "Indeed I do," cried she, endeavouring to suppress a sigh, "your friends must all wish it." "You say you are my

my friend, then do not say you wish it; though all the world were to join in the same opinion, yet say not, dearest Lucy—excuse me—*Madam*, say not you wish to have me cured, of so pure, so fervent, so tender an attachment. It is in consequence of its benign influence that I have resigned the world, and all its enjoyments, to feed in solitude on thy—on her dear image.” Whether she perceived this slip, or not, I cannot tell, but she coloured excessively; I myself was confounded, and unable to proceed.

She immediately resumed a sprightly air, and rejoined, “Pray chuse a more chearful theme; I would rather *laugh* with my friends than *cry* with them, unless they weep for *real* ills.” “What then, said I, interrupting her, do you call mine *fancied* ones?” “Truly nothing more, believe me, continued she, in the same tone; and would you exert your reason, you would be soon convinced they are such. Your chearfulness will return, your illusion be dissolved, and then you will wonder at all the absurdities you have been guilty of.” “Well then, my lovely preacher, you will not refuse me, from time to time, your kind admonitions: you counsel with a heart at ease; you have never known the anxieties attending affection unreturned, nay, unpleaded; Miss Walbrook.” “Come, come, cried she, I must not suffer you to indulge melancholy reflections. The breakfast is waiting.” “You shall not go, said I,
taking

taking her hand, till you answer my question."

"Then depend upon it my obstinacy shall triumph over your patience; for were you to detain me here a month, I will not say another word, on that foolish subject, which so much affects you. Let us go." "No, first acknowledge, said I, with that amiable grace which accompanies all you say or do, is your heart susceptible, at this moment, of the passion of love." "It is indeed susceptible, exclaimed she, of the most violent passion. There now, give me my hand." I resigned it to her. "But it is the passion of *anger*, to see you treat me thus." So saying she ran into the house; I followed, but not dispirited. Her good humour, during our repast promoted *mine*: when it was over, on her absenting herself, I withdrew.

P. S. I forgot to tell you, my Lucy informed me, at breakfast, she had a letter from Miss Greville, accounting for her neglect, and the seeming inconsistency of her late conduct to her. Lucy seemed pleased, but shewed it not to me.

Adieu.

L E T T E R IV.

Miss GREVILLE to Miss WALBROOK.

I CONCLUDED * my last with acquainting you that my brother-in-law and your good uncle, paid a visit to poor Archer; he was

* *This letter does not appear.*

was much affected at his situation, in consequence (as I told you) of a fever he caught when he snatched me from the water. Sir Thomas recommended change of air to him, and *Woodbury* as the most salutary. He shook his head, "Ah! Sir Thomas, said he, it is kind in you, but it would be curtailing the short number of days I have to live. As soon as I am better, should I ever be so, I am going to the West Indies." "With all my heart, said Sir Thomas, but you will not go without a partner." "Alas! Sir Thomas, who would have tenderness to hazard their healths in so disagreeable a voyage?" "you have not tried, replied my brother; suppose you were to ask Harriot to be of the party? You do not know how tenderly her heart has been affected since last she met you airing." (Was not Sir Thomas very indelicate, my dear?) "Sir, said he, you are too cheerful for my afflictions; it was my misfortune never to be able to gain either her love or esteem; to be despised, Sir Thomas, where I had treasured up all my hopes, is rather too hard to bear." "Certainly, Mr. Archer, you are deceived in this last particular; your late generous action has entirely vanquished my obstinate sister. You know she has dismissed Marchmont, what have you then to fear? Cheer up, man; the gay, the volatile Marchmont rejected, I have no doubt of your success." He was on the point of fainting away, and, when he recovered, he assured my

my brother that he had raised him to the supreme height of felicity, and hoped in a few days to avail himself of so unhoped-for a favour.

He was true to his appointment, so that his appearance caused not the least surprise in me. Whether the kind reception he met with proved a restorative, I know not, but he was soon visibly better. I felt a joy at his returning health, I never before experienced; often as I surveyed his emaciated form, the tear of compassion stole down my cheek; my heart reproached me for having been the unfortunate cause of his illness; and I said to myself, that I could not be too grateful for the favours I had received. Had he not given me life? ought I not, in requital, to administer to him, all the consolation in my power? What a contrast was his behaviour to Marchmont's! his so respectfully tender, the other's so coldly polite. May you, my sweet friend, be able to fix his regards! The task I fear is difficult; let me advise you to consider him as a man too variable in his disposition ever to retain a lasting impression. In the midst of his faults he is generous, nor will he seek to deceive; while he tells you he loves, he does; the coldness of his behaviour will tell you when his affection ceases. If you have seen him lately, present my compliments to him, and tell him I shall for ever esteem him, whilst he continues the friend of my Lucy; and though I had not merit enough to preserve his heart, yet I hope

hope, in favour of the resignation I made of him, he will not refuse me his friendship. Adieu! I see Archer drives up the courtyard. Believe me yours, with the most perfect amity. In three weeks, they say, every thing will be settled for the celebration of a ceremony, on which depends the future happiness of

HARRIOT GREVILLE.

L E T T E R V.

Miss W A L B R O O K to Miss G R E V I L L E.

Stoke.

JOY to you, my dear friend, on the recovery of Mr. Archer; and thanks for your two last letters, so unexpected by your Lucy, after the misrepresentations you had of her conduct, while at Woodbury. May your present lover render himself more worthy of your tenderness, than the man your pride rejected!

Strange events, my dear, have happened since I addressed you. A most unlucky accident, brought Marchmont amongst us. In one of our morning excursions, we saw him lying on the road, to all appearance, dead, in consequence of a fall from his horse; at a sight so piteous, my heart died within me. I should be unjust to the friendship you bear me, were I to conceal it from you. Oh, my dear, how intricate his behaviour! I know
not

not what to make of it ! Sometimes I am inclined to favour your conjecture, that your Lucy is the woman of his choice ; that it is for her he feels the passion he so pathetically describes. Yes, Harriot, he loves me ; every look, every word, every action, betrays the ill-disguised feelings of his soul. He is unhappy, nor is your Lucy less so ; yet to be assured of what he so carefully conceals from me, to be convinced he loves me, would make me too happy. Yet why seek for conviction ? —So little prospect !—I know not what I write—Am I intelligible ?—*His* situation so critical, my *own* so delicate ; his father, enraged at your dismissal of him, has renounced him ; cut him off from the fairest expectations ; this, at once, increases my tenderness, and precludes all flattering hopes. The greatness of his spirit—I know the greatness of his spirit—it is a pride of the noblest kind ; can I be angry at it ?

You know the agreeable insinuation—Do you think it possible to see him for ever, though not in express terms, breathing out his soul before me without emotion ; both of us, obliged, from prudence, to suppress our feelings ? The better to conceal mine, I rally him ; he then becomes peevish, petulant, and chagrined, shuns all company, and me most of all ; I am instantly alarmed at his uneasiness, and all my study is how I may restore him to his former gaiety ; he then breaks forth in such enthusiastic raptures, as

too plainly discover what has been the cause of his disquiet.

Your letter arrived when we were sitting together; the direction was not in your usual hand, so that, being at a loss, I surveyed it for some minutes with attention, before I broke the seal; *his* eyes watched *mine*. “Do not hesitate, Miss Walbrook, to peruse your letter; happy man, who is thus at liberty to address you!” I looked upon him rather gravely; his countenance became visibly agitated. “You may, Sir, be rather hasty in your conjectures: but should it be as you suspect, it will be most graciously acknowledged;” so saying I broke open my letter, and he betook himself to walking up and down the room, with his eyes now cast on the floor, now on me, who continued reading; as I proceeded, my countenance displayed the satisfaction my heart felt at its contents.

“You are pleased, *Madam*,” (an epithet he always makes use of when he is *not* pleased.) “Most certainly, Sir.” “Do you expect his arrival soon, *Madam*? I entreat you to acquaint me with the moment, as my presence may prove importunate.” I was in a humour to sport with his curiosity. “The time of his arrival—let me see”—looking again upon the letter, “O—here I have it,” muttering to myself, “In about three weeks every thing will be prepared for the celebration of a ceremony on which depends the happiness of my future life.” I kissed the

the paper, with visible marks of the highest satisfaction. "May heaven, said I, smile on the blessed hour! till that delightful period; oh! that I could make the tardy moments fly, with a rapidity equal to my wishes!" "Oh God! and is this—" he said no more, but threw himself along the sofa, and hid his face from me. I blamed myself greatly, but could not have imagined he would have been so affected by it, as I designed only to amuse him for a moment.

I arose, and approached him, "Sir! Mr. Marchmont! What is the matter? are you indisposed? Shall I get you any thing?" "No, said he, but I am ill indeed; struck to the heart. Leave me, I beseech you; it is not from you, Madam, I expect, or wish consolation." "Perhaps so, Sir, yet I should be happy to afford you any assistance, as I see you so ill." "No, Madam, reserve your compassion for a worthier object. I wish to be alone, till I find myself recovered from my present anguish; I will retire." He was silent, and sighed profoundly; my heart sympathized in his distress. "You seem displeased, Sir; am I the object of your displeasure? Tell me, what involuntary fault have I committed? Come, said I, let me hear you speak;" and I did what ought to be for ever blotted from my memory; I took his hand, I could have raised it to my lips, but delicacy forbid so bold an action; however, I continued to hold it in mine; at last a tear dropped from
H 2 my

my eyes upon it. He turned his head towards me. He sighed. I sat down by him. "How kindly cruel this! Forgive my impetuosity." His head sunk upon my bosom, the powers of articulation failed him; I fancied he ceased to breathe. "Oh! what shall I do? exclaimed I, speak, relieve my fears, and say you live." "Would it, said he, in a low voice, give you pleasure, I would wish it; otherwise, the sooner I am *nothing* the better." I burst into tears, which roused him.

He forgot his own troubles in the anxiety he expressed for mine. "You weep, my dear Miss Walbrook! Let me intreat your pity and forgiveness." He looked tenderly upon me, strained me to his throbbing bosom for a moment, and then his eloquent eyes expressed the agitation of his soul. He now saw the letter, which had fallen on the floor; "Curled fate! said he, yet do not hate me; all other ills were light to that." "Hate you, Sir! why should you suppose I hated you! Is it to hate you, to shew the most intimate concern for all your troubles? Your reproaches then, are as unjust, as they are unkind." "Oblige me then, said he, by hiding that letter for ever from my sight, and if you can, forget its contents." At the same time he presented it to me. "Your first request shall be most readily obeyed; but the second, in honour I ought not to forget." "In honour ought not to forget? Gracious powers!" exclaimed

exclaimed he. " Stop your exclamations, Sir, till I have acquainted you with the share you bear in its contents. Miss Greville makes you her most affectionate compliments, and begs me to inform you that she has so far surmounted her ill-placed prepossession, as to be ready, within three weeks, to resign her person, and fortune, to the protection of Mr. Archer." He clasped me in his arms and kissed me. I was surprised at this sudden impetuosity, as in all our *tête à têtes*, he had never attempted so unwarrantable a liberty. I tore myself from him and looked much displeased at the action.

" My life, resumed he, has been one continued scene of error ; the letter was from Miss Greville, was it ? the contents treated of her intended marriage ? On my knees let me implore your pardon. How unjust and ungenerous my behaviour ! I never can forgive myself." I smiled to see with what warmth he excused himself ; and as I had been the cause of his distress, I thought it better to step out of my altitudes and treat lightly all that had happened. " Well, Sir, my good nature is not proof against your humiliation ; I attribute every thing to your sudden indisposition ; no man can be answerable for petulance of speech when pain predominates." I wanted to make him believe that I supposed it was all owing to sudden illness, and he seemed willing to let it pass off as such.

" Well,

“ Well, Sir, said I, now as you are better, I will leave you.” I was rising to go, but he forcibly held me down on my seat. “ Indeed, my sweet girl, I cannot part from you ; did you but know to what excess—but—” and he stopped. I begged leave to look over my letter again ; he bowed, and when I had done, he held out his hand accompanied by a most expressive look ; “ Will you not favour me with a perusal of its contents ?” “ Not for worlds ; the contents are too sacred for male eyes to scrutinize.” “ Not a friend surely ?” “ Yes, that friend of the opposite sex.” “ But if that friend could taste the pleasures resulting from so sweet an intercourse, and would by every action seek to render himself worthy of such a confidence ?” “ ’Tis impossible.” “ Try me, and punish me hereafter should I prove unworthy ; but, do not, my sweet smiler, trifle longer with my impatience.” “ How sweetly condescending we can be when we have a point in view ! Never, Sir, reproach me with female curiosity. Will you be satisfied with such paragraphs as I shall think proper to communicate to you.” “ Then plainly, no ; those you would conceal from me are those I am most solicitous to read.” “ Ungenerous man !” “ Unpersuadable Lucy !” And so we continued for a long time, he begging, I persisting, till the arrival of company put a period

period to our dialogue; and here it is time I should put a period to my letter. Adieu!

LUCY WALBROOK.

L E T T E R VI.

From Mr. MARCHMONT to CHARLES LEWSUM, Esq. *Stoke.*

L EWSUM! I can no longer doubt but that I am in possession of her heart. I am perfectly assured. How can I tear myself from her? I cannot bear to see her afflicted, nor have I it in my power to administer consolation. My health is so much better that I must now leave her to pursue some course of life for my future support: should it prove successful, I will lay myself at her feet, and tell her—Ah, what, Charles? what every look and action has long since informed her of. I think I will seize the first opportunity of purchasing a commission; in seeking glory, I may forget—no, not my love; that powerful tyrant has subdued every other passion within me; nor, till I cease to live, shall I cease to love. In the army a thousand accidents may happen to curtail a life that is become burthensome to me. It would be only lengthened by pursuing rural occupations, were I to turn farmer. Yet had I but a kind partner to share with me the toils of life, I would not exchange it to become the greatest potentate
on

on earth. Yet shall I think of levelling that best of women to my humble fortunes? she who was born to grace the highest rank? forbid it love—Forbid it justice! Yet the moment, in which I shall hear she is another's, will be the last of my peace, if not of life. Oh, Lewsum! I am dead to hope; dead to every worldly joy. A croud of painful ideas press so thick upon me, that I am unable to say more, than that I am

thine sincerely,

MARCHMONT.

L E T T E R VII.

Mr. LEWSUM to W. MARCHMONT, Esq.

Southampton-Street.

MY heart, dear William, sincerely sympathizes with thy distress; Yet am I not the only one that compassionates thy late sufferings.

As I was riding this morning through Hyde-Park, I was struck with the appearance of your father; I paid him a very cold salute, with my hat only, and passed on. He looked ill. In a minute after he came up to me; I assumed a very formal countenance, and sought to shun him, but it was impossible. Thy injuries rushing instantly into my head, I could not help regarding him with a contemptuous air; I believe he felt it. "Mr. Lewsum," said he, and stopped—looked distressed

distressed and sighed. "Well, Sir, what are your commands with me?" "Have you seen my son lately, Sir?" "No, Sir, and I believe few else have seen him, but surgeons and apothecaries. Good morning to you, Sir;" and was going. "Nay, pray, Sir, Mr. Lewsum, stay a moment, you know not how you have alarmed me. You'll forgive my doubting what you say, Sir." "How can you be alarmed at the sufferings of such a graceless son?" "Well, but Mr. Lewsum, he is my child, I cannot bear to hear of his illness without feeling for him. Do not let me languish longer in suspense." "I fancy, Sir, the truth will not be much more pleasing, if you have the least sensibility, than the state of suspense you complain of; in few words then, your cruel, your *very* cruel treatment of him, so preyed upon his spirits, that he fell into a very melancholy way; he had no friend to whom he could impart his troubles; riding became his sole occupation, when one day, unfortunately for him, his horse threw him; he broke a rib, and an arm, and received besides a dreadful contusion on the head, which totally deprived him of his senses; he was picked up by a clergyman's family, the good pastor treated him with a truly *paternal* tenderness." Here conscience glowed on his cheek. I proceeded, "Two months his life was despaired of; he is, thank God, now better, but it is thought, by the very low way he is in, he will fall into a
H 5 decline;

decline ; if he does not, he designs purchasing a commission, a lieutenancy or some such post, as his fortune cannot procure him a better, in one of our regiments that are soon to embark for the Colonies.”—My harangue was cut short, by his bursting into tears ; his contrition moved me. “ And have you really told me truth, said he, and does he take on so sadly ? His behaviour has been very bad, to be sure ; but yet, Mr. Lewsum, his sufferings touch me ; his finances, too, are perhaps in a shattered condition.” “ O as to that, ere now, they must be quite exhausted. I made him an offer of what sum he pleased ; his answer was, those who had but little must study contentment ; it was a favour he never could repay, and the weight of the obligation would add to his misfortunes.” He opened his pocket-book, and took out the 100l. bill, which I here send you. “ Here, said he, could you not make a present to him of this, as from yourself ? He must not want, Mr. Lewsum ; you need not mention me.” “ Had you not, returned I, better acknowledge so generous an action yourself ? for, depend upon it, he will sooner starve than receive pecuniary favours from any one. Perhaps he may have left his lodgings, and may be preparing to quit the kingdom by this time : it is not impossible, from the date of his last.” “ And, think you, Mr. Lewsum, my boy can be so unkind, as to leave his native country, and make no effort to see his father ?” “ Undoubtedly,

“Undoubtedly, Sir! have you not renounced him? Did he not, in his letter, intreat your forgiveness of an error that he was that moment ready to repair? When, with the most unrelenting indignation, you discarded one of the noblest fellows in the world, banished him from your house and affections, as totally as though he never had a being. I should disown him for my friend, after such treatment, were he to make any concessions towards a reconciliation.” “You are warm in your friendships, young gentleman!” “I glory in my friend, Sir, and would die to serve him.” “Give me your hand, Sir, said he, I love your sincerity; I love the unfortunate youth whose cause you espouse. In time, perhaps—but no matter—oblige me, Sir, with the conveyance of this bill; ’tis all I have about me at present: particular business will detain me for a few days, after that I shall be glad to see you in St. James’s-Street. I came but yesterday from the country; times have been very unhappy, Mr. Lewsum, you do not know how the poor lad’s absence has unhinged me, how many pangs I have endured. You need not take any notice to him that you have seen me; but, perhaps, I am long ago forgotten by him.” I did not tell him whether I would, or would not; and so ended our conference.

Be assured, William, that his resentment will not hold out long; he loves you sincerely, yet cannot tell how to descend. Pleasures
are

are yet in store for you. I cannot but think you are on the very verge of that happiness, for which your soul sighs. I devoutly hope that the prophecies will be fulfilled of thy

sincere friend,

and humble servant,

CHARLES LEWSUM.

L E T T E R VIII.

Mr. MARCHMONT TO CHARLES LEWSUM, Esq.

Stoke.

OH, Charles ! Never till this moment, have I been a repiner. Religion and philosophy may teach us to subdue passions, but cannot teach us to conquer our feelings. May the poignancy of my present distress, atone for the follies of my past life ! In a few hours, how is all my worldly hope blasted ! I had but one left, and that in an unpropitious moment, is torn from me ; yet had I acted less on the principles of honour, I might have attempted a means that would have spared me the distraction I now feel. Oh, Lewsum ! pity and pardon my despondency, and I'll proceed with my narrative.

This morning then, my Lucy, (Oh no, not *my* Lucy—Yet I will indulge the momentary pleasure, I feel, whilst writing the fond appellation) my Lucy and I, then, were enjoying the mutual satisfaction we feel in conversing with each other ; when a servant,
in

in livery entering, presented her with a letter. "Good heavens! Stephen, said she, what can bring you here? My father, I hope, is well." He answered in the affirmative, and retired. I observed her countenance, as she proceeded to examine the contents of the letter; it became visibly affected. At length she gave a profound sigh; it fell from her lifeless hand, her head sunk upon her bosom, and she fainted away. Shocked at so sudden an alteration, I was almost distracted. Mr. Hanmer came into the room; when he beheld her pitiable situation, his anxiety fell little short of mine. His presence was no restraint upon me; I complained, in all the agonies of woe. "That cursed letter, Sir, said I, pointing to it, is the cause of her illness!" "Sir, said he, I will presume on a father's privilege (for as such she has ever regarded me) and acquaint you with the contents. In a moment he cast his eyes upon me, moistened with tears. "Dear, unhappy girl! Oh, Sir, to what miseries is she not destined? of what avail will all our friendship be, in a trial like this?" I could scarcely attend to the good man's exclamations, so ardently was I waiting her return to life. At length she breathed the most heart-rending sighs. She opened her eyes; she saw our distress; I had supported her in her chair, she gazed upon me, then burst from me, and threw her arms round Mr. Hanmer's neck. "Can you not, my more than father, preserve me from everlasting misery? Oh, bless your Lucy, nor yield

yield her up to ruin. Heavens! clasping her hands, What have I done to deserve so severe a chastisement?" I now approached her, entreated her to make me acquainted with the cause of her sorrow, "command my friendship—my life—every thing will I hazard to give you peace." "Peace! Peace! repeated she, and obey the contents of that fatal letter!" "As a partaker of your griefs may I not read its contents?" She shook her head. I took it up and read as follows:

"Daughter Lucy,

"I think you have sense enough to know
 "what a devilish clog a young woman is
 "upon a father that loves his pleasures. Now,
 "at last, the inconveniency is like to cease."

"A young fellow of fashion and fortune
 "saw you some months ago; he liked you
 "from the first moment; his liking is much
 "increased from the general accounts given
 "of you. He generously offers to take you
 "without a shilling; I'm sure you will adore
 "him for so noble a proposal, and shew
 "yourself obedient to my commands, by
 "returning with Collins, in the chaise. By
 "an immediate acquiescence with them you
 "will be entitled to the blessing of your
 "fond father and sincere friend,

"JACOB WALBROOK."

Parkmont, Tuesday, 8 o'clock.

Oh, Lewsum! poor and destitute as I am, how could I oppose its contents? Was it a time, when every worldly advantage lay before her, to make an open declaration of my sentiments?

sentiments? Time, perhaps, would banish me from her mind. The noble independency offered her would raise her above misfortune's reach. What could I do but urge her to comply, if she found her destined lover worthy? "What! Sir," said she, with a countenance much agitated, "would you have me consent to a legal prostitution; (for it can be called by no other name) merely for pecuniary advantages, for I never can love him? Think you I have a soul so base?--- No; misery is my portion, and I embrace it---but never shall my lips pronounce a perjured vow. Will you not, my Fanny, my friend, my sister;" continued she, turning to Miss Hanmer, who stood by her, almost petrified with grief; "Will you not pity me? Oh! these tears tell me how tenderly you share my anguish. You, Sir, turning to me, why do you oppress me by this goodness? I never can repay it." "My dearest Lucy, said I, grasping her hands, words cannot describe the anguish that rends my heart; nor is this a time to acquaint you with the excess of my grief; and, yet there *was* a time--- but no matter---May you be happy! it is the only wish of my soul. As for myself, I am undeserving the smiles of fortune; disappointments have made me callous to all evils, but one---it is an evil shall die with me, it is now too late to disclose it. Fathers, my charming Lucy, have flinty hearts!--'Tis their's to command, 'tis our's to submit."

"Not in every point, my dear Sir, said Mr. Hanmer;

Hanmer; I do not think the Almighty will approve the sacrifice this dear child's father would make of her to a stranger; nor do I think she should dare approach the altar, and call her Maker to witness prophanation and perjury, in compliance with the most unnatural caprice. Nor ought she, on any account, to dispose of herself without his approbation." "Will you then, my dear Sir, said she, absolve me, should I act contrary to my father's will? and on my knees I swear never to give myself to any man, without his consent; but with his present request I fear I never can comply." I raised her, and seated her on a chair; "Oh! my dear Miss Walbrook! your father's commands may not always seem as harsh as they now do; perhaps the object, he has chosen, is worthy of your tenderest affection, and he may be the happy instrument of procuring you years of uninterrupted felicity." "Do you wish it then?" said she, looking tenderly upon me. "Do I wish it, Miss Walbrook?—Heavens, what a fate is mine!—I wish you happy."—"Then do not think, Sir, it ever can be from so fatal a compliance." "Do not, then; dearest Lucy! said I, pressing her hands to my lips, consent to do an act that must embitter all your future days, if your inclinations should not coincide. Perhaps, when your father sees how repugnant this marriage is to you, he will cease to urge it; he cannot be obdurate enough to resist your pathetick supplications." "Alas! Sir, said Mr. Hanmer,

mer, I am pained to be obliged to speak thus harshly of our Lucy's father ; tenderness and humanity mark not his character ; but pride, passion, and intemperance, are the only principles by which he is swayed. His kind agent, the expected Mrs. Collins, is the guardian both of his house and person ; I doubt not but this present scheme is of her projecting. 'Tis this vile woman, who has rendered this amiable girl an alien to her father's affections ; 'twas she deprived her, early in life, of a fond, and tender mother ; 'twas to gratify her revenge and pride, that both mother and daughter, for months together, were obliged to take shelter in my house. Mrs. Walbrook's exemplary piety and fortitude supported her, for a time, against the repeated insults she received from her husband and his mistress, till the Father of Mercies pleased to reward sufferings like hers."—He paused a moment, then continued, " Sir, she ceased to live—and immortal pleasures now compensate for sorrows past. She recommended her heart's only treasure to my protection—her Lucy ; it was all she could bequeath me. With a truly paternal eye I have ever regarded the precious trust. Her father has never since been solicitous for her stay with him, but when he thinks it is in opposition to her inclination, and then Mrs. Collins does not fail to exert her power."

" Ah, Sir, said I, why do you make me now acquainted with these painful truths ? or rather,

rather, why did you not make me acquainted with them before?" "I hope," returned he, "you will not think my reason a bad one.—My poor Lucy! unnatural as his behaviour is to her, would wish, in the eyes of strangers, to have his fame untainted; she says, he is still her father—may have many virtues, though none of them are exerted in her favour." "Oh, the wretch!" exclaimed I.—"Nay, Sir, stop, cried she; my mother's precepts shall never be forgotten; she never exclaimed against him, amidst all her sufferings, nor can I permit it; were he left to the workings of his own heart, I do not doubt but I should soften him by my submission." Here the chaise, which drove up, made her turn pale. She wiped her eyes, she took each of our hands in turn—she sighed, and exclaimed, "She's come—she's come. Then there is no resource.—There, my tears are dried; do not let her know I have been weeping; it will make my treatment worse." Then affecting to smile. "Now my trouble is past—Yes, my dear mother, I will imitate the great example set me by you, never to dispute the will of Heaven, of my father: does not your offended shade recoil at the weakness I have betrayed?" Then looking at us, "How must I be fallen in all your opinions!" I was obliged to apply my handkerchief to my eyes; I was unable to reply.

Mrs. Collins entered: her age appeared to be about thirty-five, of a size above the common;

mon; her complexion sanguine; little dark eyes, that bespoke her heart to be vindictive; hair of the same colour; good teeth; her voice so rough, as even to border on the masculine.

"Your servant, Mr. Hanmer—Your servant, Miss Fanny." She only dropped me a curtsey; then turning to Lucy, "Your dear papa, Miss, is dying to see you—so are we all, for that matter. Such a long visit, Miss! he was afraid poor dear gentleman, that you would wear out your welcome, as the saying is."

"Well, returned her lady, all that is very well; but how does my father? has he company at his house?" "Oh, he is quite pure, Ma'am; and as for company, we have not had any for some time." "What no strange gentleman?" "Alas, no, Ma'am, I know of no stranger." "Why, my father writes me, he has a stranger with him." "Oh, Ma'am, that's for certain, no—my poor master certainly means that he expects a stranger, which must certainly be the case." "And pray, said the dear girl, do you know any thing of such a person's coming to the house?" "Upon my virtue, as I said before, certainly no." "Well, returned my sweet friend, I see you can keep a secret, and therefore it would be criminal in me to wish you to betray your trust."

So saying, she left the room, Miss Hanmer following. Had I not feared my poor Lucy would have been the sufferer, I should have taken this piece of insensibility to a severe task; but my mind was all a chaos; I was
incapable

incapable of forming any direct plan; however, I put a few questions to her, which she answered with that evasive cunning, in which she is a profound adept. Lucy not returning immediately, I went in pursuit of her. I found Miss Hanmer weeping over her; I wrapped my arms about them—

“Will you not, my dear friends, let me be a sharer in your griefs? Be your joys your own; it is the only favour I can now solicit.”

“How, Sir! said Fanny, can I part from my dearest Lucy? Before we meet again, Oh heavens! to what misery may she not be reserved! Assume, my dear friend, your accustomed presence of mind, nor let your insulting tyrants too precipitately plunge you into an abyss, from whence there is no return; weary them out by delays, till you can find some means to make us acquainted with your situation; if you find it desperate, invent some means to escape; these arms shall always be open to receive you.” “Let me enforce, my dear Miss Walbrook, your friend’s advice: do not consent to an union, unless your heart is affected by the tenderest of all passions.”

“No, Sir, said she, be assured that I must ever abhor a marriage where love—” She stopped, and gazed upon me, with eyes expressive of the tenderest woe. Cursed fate, Charles, that prevented my disclosing the anguish I endured!—I clasped her to my agitated bosom, “Oh, my lovely Lucy, ere you give your hand to another,—think—Oh think

think, thou best of women—" I kissed her trembling lips, and rushed out of the room, scarce able to support myself. I flew to my apartment, and there, unobserved, I gave a loose to my despair, till I was roused from my stupor, by the departure of the chaise.

I ran down; my countenance expressed the extremest despair. Mr. Hanmer saw me; "For Heaven's sake, Sir, why are you thus disordered?" "Do not detain me, Sir, I must pursue the chaise; does it not contain all my hopes, your Lucy and mine? Is it possible I should exist without her?" "Nay, Sir," said he, opposing my going out, "let me prevail on you to go into the parlour till you are more composed." He rather dragged than led me to it; and when I there beheld Miss Hanmer's grief, it was, if possible, an augmentation of my own. "Gracious God! exclaimed I, that I should ever be oppressed by misfortunes I can support with so little fortitude! Oh, my dear friends! your Lucy was my soul's richest treasure—she was my all of happiness—from the first moment I beheld the lovely maid, my heart was devoted to her. Think, my friends, from the opportunities I have had of listening to her enchanting conversation, whether it is diminished. If ever the softer passions touch'd your breast, Miss Hanmer, you may judge of my feelings. You know my story, and my father's unkindness to me. Could a man who truly loved, wish to involve the object
of

of his affections in his penury? I had flattered myself, that, e'er this, my father might have recalled his hasty malediction, and that I might have made her the offer of a heart she must ever possess. Was it a time, Mr. Hanmer, to acquaint her with my sentiments, when her father apprized her of proposals that would prove so much to her advantage, could she be brought to approve them? I, Mr. Hanmer, had nothing to bestow but the most unfeigned affection, which cannot cease but with my life. I once flattered myself she returned my affection with equal tenderness; could I then wish to involve her in my ruin? But by all the friendship you have, though unmerited, shewn me, let me conjure you, not to disclose to her my sentiments: with me they shall be buried, unless an unexpected turn of favour should place me in a situation to receive her father's sanction to my addresses, if it is not put out of my power by this intended marriage."

I had the pleasure to receive Mr. Hanmer's approbation of what I had declared; his amiable daughter, likewise, did not refuse me hers. They attempted to flatter my griefs, by telling me, she would not consent to this marriage; they went further, they told me, Lewsum—yes the dear, flattering friends, told me, that my Lucy, my angelic Lucy, hated me not—I again repeat, Charles, repeat, that she hated me not—That she loved me; 'tis a joy too exquisite to be indulged. I will here
dispatch

dispatch my paquet, being unable to say more, than that I am,

yours sincerely,

MARCHMONT.

P. S. Why have you kept me thus long in suspense concerning your welfare? Mr. Hanmer brings me a letter, the superscription, my dear Charles's. Ah my friend! had the promised reconciliation been offered before, I might have hoped; but now hope dies, and I am miserable.

L E T T E R IX.

From Mr. LEWSUM to WILLIAM
MARCHMONT, Esq.

Dear William!

YOUR melancholy epistle found me preparing to attend a summons from your father; how my heart recoiled, when I read the afflictions he had overwhelmed you with! but notwithstanding I obeyed, hoping to learn something to thy advantage.

I was introduced to his bed-chamber, which implied illness. Not a sensation of pity touched my heart; when he exclaimed, "I am ill, Sir—very ill. Do you think you could prevail on my son to pay me a visit?" "Why, Sir, after the shocking treatment he has received, it would be hardly probable; but that he acts on principles so very different—" He interrupted me; "Well, said he, as he has
such

such noble sentiments, do you think he would refuse me a visit, were you to entreat him? He loves not his own soul, better than he does you." "A woman only excepted," said I, smiling. I observed his countenance, to see how he would take it. He paused. I thought it now my time to plead; "And have you really disinherited him, as you at first proposed? If you have done him so unmerited an injury, for heaven's sake, recall it whilst you have it in your power; though by an unhappy accident, his peace is gone for ever, yet it is a duty you owe him; were you to see how calmly he bears his misfortunes, you would adore his virtues." "I do indeed, said he, in a faint voice; but thank heaven, I have proceeded no further than words; he is still dear to my affections; the story you related to me of his sufferings, has partly reduced me to the state in which you now see me. I should have entreated your mediation sooner, but that I feared a refusal." "Well, said I, taking his hand, look upon me as your friend. I will be answerable for your son's return, as soon as he shall learn your indisposition." He pressed my hand in an agony; the tear of contrition gushed from his eye—my anger was disarmed. When I had consoled him, I went home to dispatch this, by an express to you.

I am now going to make him a second visit. Adieu! and assure yourself that all will end happily; and thy adored Lucy shall yet be thine!

thine ! which is the ardent wish of thy ever faithful,

CHARLES LEWSUM.

L E T T E R IX.

Mr. MARCHMONT to the Rev. Mr. HANMER.

London, St. James's-Street.

Dear and reverend Sir,

MY hasty departure prevented my paying you my unfeigned acknowledgements, for every instance of your christian benevolence, bestowed on a wretch who has been long the sport of cruel fortune. I found my father in a situation that must have stifled every emotion of resentment within me, had it been possible I could have harboured any; the weak state to which he is reduced, and his excessive grief, for the troubles he has, by his obstinacy, brought upon me, awake in me all the feelings of a son, whose highest satisfaction, till a late unhappy event, was to render him the duty due from a child of his fondest hopes ; till an opposition, on which depended my future welfare, led me to act contrary to his inclinations ; yet nevertheless, I would have forfeited all to have convinced him of my obedience ; but my efforts were rejected by the very person in whom all his hopes were centered. He is yet too ill for me to hazard a declaration of my situation ;

VOL. II.

I

should

should it prove unpleasing, it might add to his indisposition; every pang would then be redoubled on me. But ah! my friend, of what avail will a declaration be now!—Who knows but at the moment I write you this, all my earthly hopes may be sacrificed, and the most amiable of women marked for wretchedness! If you should learn it, I beg of you to convey the fatal news to my friend Lewsum, (his address is Southampton-Street) whose friendly endeavours will attempt to console me under an affliction that is without a parallel—Should I receive it alone, a sudden act of rage, might tarnish a reputation, which, I bless God, has yet remained uncensurable. Let me entreat you, further add to the obligations I already owe you, my dear Sir, by dispatching an express to me, should any accounts from the dear sufferer arrive. Though I never could make her an explicit declaration, yet I hope she must have discovered the feelings of my soul. Should she wrong my sentiments, and in resentment yield herself another's!—Oh! Mr. Hanmer, speak comfort to my affliction!—Your dear Fanny, to whom my tenderest regards are due, will she not breathe a sigh of compassion for an unhappy man? I am, dear Sir, her and your sincere friend, and most grateful humble servant,

WILLIAM MARCHMONT.

Friday night, 11 o'clock.

L E T.

L E T T E R X.

From Miss HANMER to WILLIAM
MARCHMONT, Esq.

Dear Sir,

AT my father's request, who is indisposed with the rheumatism, I am commanded to return you his warmest thanks for your obliging favour to him, and to assure you, that none more sincerely sympathizes with you than himself, and his daughter.

I flatter myself that the inclosed will prove a more sovereign remedy to your disorder, than any thing that comes from the pen of your much obliged and sincere friend,

FANNY HANMER.

P. S. It came by a private hand. Should you think proper to send a letter, I readily undertake to convey it, inclosed in mine. My dearest Lucy, must pardon this breach of trust for exposing her letters to you, as it is to the only man in the world who can be sensible of her merits.

Stoke, Thursday, 9 o'clock.

L E T T E R XI.

Miss WALBROOK to Miss HANMER.

Parkmont.

TAKE, my dear Fanny, the melancholy accounts of your Lucy's situation; a vigilant and spiteful duenna in the infamous Mrs. Collins; my father advised and guided by her; a lover in the person of — But I will proceed more methodically.

I was received by my father with politeness; tenderness is a weakness he is by no means guilty of. The first evening passed off, and no lover appeared—My hopes were strengthened, and I became fitter to encounter the dreaded meeting; at length, I was ordered, by him who has a claim to all possible compliances, to make myself fit to see company, and appear a little more slightly in my lover's eyes. "Are you really in earnest, Sir, said I? I shall rejoice to find your letter was merely an effect of the gaiety of your temper, and that you wanted to try to alarm me. I hope, dear Sir, you could not mean it." "Not mean it, hussy? Yes, I do mean it, and expect the gentleman here every hour." "I am sorry for it, Sir, as I am not in a fit humour to receive him, having been much discomposed by some very impertinent lectures, from the good-natured Mrs. Collins—and do not think I shall appear to half the advantage

advantage I may sometime hence." "Nothing disrespectful of Collins, girl; never woman acquitted herself more faithfully of her duty." "Well then, Sir, do you not think some little indulgence should be shewn your daughter, who never voluntarily sought to give you pain, or ever will? but, indeed, indeed, my dearest father, you must not compel me to enter a state, in which I never can be happy." He turned aside his head. "Oh do not let me plead in vain; tell me you will recede; I never will engage myself but with your consent; on my knees I beseech you—" "Begone! said he sternly, nor think, by this affected humility, to divert me from my purpose—Begone! and remember that my word, once given, is not to be revoked." I burst into tears and retired to my apartment.

Soon after Mrs. Collins appeared and summoned me to the dining room. She had treated me very cruelly in the morning, which I had not then forgot. "Come, walk down, Miss," said she with an air of inward triumph. "Indeed, Mrs. Collins, I must take the liberty to tell you I shan't. You are a very wicked woman, and therefore do not imagine I will ever be in the least subservient to your commands.—" "Nor to those of any body else, I believe, replied she pertly, but a husband's." "Well pray, said I, who is this husband your goodness has picked out for me?" "That, Miss, is a question more becoming your honoured papa to answer." "Well

“ Well then, carry my duty to him, and tell him I am indisposed—No, not so, recalling my words, that would be a falsehood I abhor; tell him I should be glad to be excused.” She went away muttering, and I sat down, and scribbled thus far, expecting every moment when I shall be called down.

I see more and more it is all a trick to get rid of me, no matter to whom; but as at this time it makes some difference to me, they shall not find it so easy a matter as they imagined. Were it to procure my father any solid advantages, cruel as he has ever been to me, I would sacrifice every wish for his good; but neither duty nor religion demands the sacrifice, they would now make of me. But hark ! I hear my father, let me conceal this messenger of ill news in my bosom.

In Continuation.

My letter was but just deposited when my father appeared, his brows, naturally stern, were contracted by frowns. His looks terrified me before he spoke. I arose to attend him. He scornfully took my hand, and, without breaking silence, led me to the expected lover. Sir George Barclay came forward to meet me. You cannot have forgot the week's visit we spent with him at Castlehill, nor the very great disgust we conceived at his libertine conversation—Well, Fanny, it was he.

With

With the familiarity of an old acquaintance he stepped forward to salute me ; I turned away my face, so that I believe he touched nothing more than the border of my cap ; he then led me to a seat. " Lucy, said my father, do you not welcome Sir George to Parkmont ?" I presumed to say, that, as I imagined he always gave his friends a sincere welcome, it was unnecessary for me to say any thing upon the subject. He looked sincerely upon me, and said, he thought I was in a very agreeable humour. I bowed my head.

'Twas now Sir George's turn to speak. " Upon my soul, Mr. Walbrook, you are too severe ; I never beheld any earthly being so divinely charming. You are a father, and must be insensible to beauties so exquisite." " Perhaps so, Sir George, and for that reason I'll leave you to the study of them." Was ever father so indelicate ? I would have left the room, but Sir George held my hand, which he kissed with such fervour, as called up all the blood into my cheeks. I snatched it from him, he threw his arms around me, carried me to a chair, took another, and seated himself next me. " Upon my word, Miss Walbrook, you do not treat me with that familiarity natural to an old acquaintance ; can you have forgot the delightful week we spent at Castle-hill ; There, Miss Walbrook, I felt all the power of your charms, but a succession of engagements absolutely made it impossible for me to tell you sooner how deeply

deeply my heart has retained the dear impression." "Sir, I hope a succession of engagements will shortly efface that slight impression; for I will deal candidly with you; you must know that I am not to learn the reason, for which I am introduced to you; my soul disdains all mean evasion—On my father I can have no reliance, therefore, let me entreat you, Sir, to withdraw your intentions in my favour, and fix them where they may reasonably expect a suitable return; from me, Sir, you never can expect a voluntary compliance; a generous mind would scorn to take advantage of my helpless situation, nor would the generous mind be satisfied with the possession of a person, whose heart can never repay his tendernefs."

He had the boldness to lay his hand on my lips, "For heaven's sake, my divine charmer, say not another word; talk not of generosity; did you ever hear of a man in love so capable of generosity as to resign the mistress of his soul to another?" "I have, Sir George, nay have been a witness of it. Did you never feel your heart exult, when you have had an opportunity of raising the virtuous mind, when oppressed by cruelty and caprice?—Be that generous man, Sir George, and let the consciousness of having acted up to the dictates of honour be your reward. Your looks bespeak your consent---I will retire, and take your silence as a proof that
you

you acknowledge the truth of all I have just said."

"The d---I take me (that was his libertine expression) if you have not quite nonsuited me---but, by my soul, I love you more than ever, nor will consent to relinquish so inestimable a prize." My father's return, and the dinner bell, put a period to our dialogue, and I was, for the present, relieved.

My swain attached himself so much to his bottle after dinner, that my presence was deemed unnecessary. I attempted to gain over the house maid, but soon found she was a creature of Collins's; the other servants I am not at liberty to converse with. You remember Susan; could I get sight of her, I doubt not to make her my friend so far, as to get this conveyed to the post-house.

Nine o'clock.

I have succeeded to my wish; I just now saw her pass under my window, and begged her to contrive some method to speak to me when Collins was out of the way; she found a lucky moment, and has promised to convey this to you. She likewise acquainted me with a piece of news, that I have two little brothers left in the neighbourhood; the eldest about three years old; they were brought from London, and settled here soon after I went to Woodbury; this plainly accounts to me for my father's ready compliance to conduct me to Stoke, after my return from

thence ; their virtuous mother, Mrs. Collins, threatened to leave my father, if he would not consent to have them sent for. Could a man of his humane disposition do otherwise ? They are often visitors here ; I suppose I shall soon be introduced to them.

Now let me say a word to my good Mr. Hanmer : beg him to write to me ; tell him, his advice shall be the guide of my actions, convinced as I am, that, whilst I act upon the principles he will lay down for me, I shall not be a dishonour to his friendship.

Lastly, my dear Fanny, let me ask after the health of your friend—Why should I hesitate calling him *my* friend ? No I will not--- Is he well ? Is he happy ? Was he angry, that he would not see me before I left you ? You cannot have forgot his abrupt departure ; alas ! my dear, I never can. Shall I tell you I was disappointed that I saw him not return ? He looked affected---Perhaps -- Yes, perhaps he thought meanly of me, that I expressed so much repugnance to do my duty. No, Fanny, it was not that neither ; I am at a loss to think what it was ; and yet, I would not have him think hardly of me. Oh days of sweet tranquillity, where are you fled ?

Adieu !

LUCY WALBROOK.

Wednesday night, 12 o'clock.

L E T.

L E T T E R XII.

Sir G E O R G E B A R C L A Y to R I C H A R D
M O R L E I G H, Esq.

Parkmont.

YOU have heard, Dick, of Walbrook's handsome daughter; the most extravagant report can never do her justice. I saw her some months ago—I thought her a Phoenix then; but in my dear little masquerader I still found new charms, so that I had not inclination to pursue the chase, had not the whining little devil pined away her life, because I refused to marry a prostitute (though of my own making) I might still have been attached to her; but the woman who hopes to call me husband, must be as nice of honour, and of as true delicacy, as my life has been the reverse.

Mr. Walbrook is one of us, as great a libertine as thy friend; drinks, games, and rakes with the best of us. From a similarity of disposition we soon became friends. I mentioned his charming daughter, told him that I had seen her, and was become her slave: I amused him about settlements (as he seemed so pleased at our designs) without ever determining to enter into engagements with him, much more with any woman, but upon my own terms. Charlotte being dead, no new game had been started; Lucy Walbrook was then thought worthy of supplying her place—but she is reported to be such a
vixen

vixen in virtue, that nothing but being amused with the thoughts of marriage could bring her to my lure.

She was on a visit—her obliging father commanded her home; his *fille-de-joye* was his ambassadress; her embassy was crowned with success, and she returned triumphant, with the queen of beauty by her side.

By my soul, Dick, I'm confoundedly puzzled; there is a certain dignity about her, that freezes my blood, whenever I think of the mischief I am meditating against her; and I begin to believe that true love has drove out dishonour from my heart; I am very much afraid that I shall turn out an honefter fellow than I had intended to be.

Could I gain her consent to be mine, on my own terms, five or ten thousand pounds would silence all the father's scruples. I long to make the attempt; but should it not be crowned with success, I am ruined there for ever, that's positive; so adieu! I accompany Walbrook, next week, to the races.

GEORGE BARCLAY.

L E T T E R XIII.

WILLIAM MARCHMONT, Esq. to
Miss HANMER.

IT is not in words that I can express, to my dearest Miss Hanmer, the excess of my obligations to her. My heart more warmly acknowledges your goodness, than my
pen

pen can describe it; yet am I still an incroacher upon your charity. Your compassion tells me you will not refuse to convey the inclosed to the dear sufferer. From what a weight of misery has her charming letter relieved me? How I adore her noble spirit! May it assist her to go through so arduous a trial! Barclay is a villain! I ardently long for the moment when I shall tell him so.

Adieu, Madam, and assure yourself that I am your most grateful, most affectionate, humble servant,

MARCHMONT.

London, Friday 6 o'clock.

All that is due from gratitude and friendship, say for me to the good Mr. Hanmer.

L E T T E R XIV.

WILLIAM MARCHMONT Esq. to Miss
WALBROOK.

My dear Madam,

AS water to the thirsty traveller, or food to the fasting pilgrim, was your charming epistle (though designed not for my perusal) to my despair. If you still persevere in the rejection of your new lover, let a man, who has long adored you, supply his place. Let me conjure, my beloved Lucy, to inform me—as I know how nicely she is circumstanced, whether I am permitted to hope—and whether she would wish my proposals to her

her father should precede my visit to his charming daughter?

Most ardently do I long to throw myself at the feet of my adorable Lucy, but for the situation of my father, whose declining health and restored affection, make it difficult for me to leave him, even for a day; as he kindly tells me a few hours of my company would do him more service than any medical assistance.

The goodness of my dear Miss Walbrook's heart will decide for me: and the favour of an immediate answer will contribute to moderate the impatience of her eternally devoted

MARCHMONT.

*London, St. James's Street,
half past 12 o'clock.*

L E T T E R X V .

Miss WALBROOK to Miss HANMER.

My dear Fanny,

GREAT are the obligations we owe to his ingenuity who invented the art of printing: but how much more do we owe to him, or her, who first taught us, by the help of the grey-goose-quill, "to speed the soft intercourse!" Without this same blessed intercourse how should I have received my Fanny's consolatory epistle?

Your friend is gone -- his father you expect, will receive him into favour and then!

—And

---And what then, my dearest girl? Why did you refuse to say what?---You will leave it to him to tell me. But ah! who knows if I shall ever behold him more?

Barclay is hourly more detested,---my father hourly more urgent to complete my ruin---and I am hourly determined to oppose his unnatural commands.

I must tell you of an odd circumstance that happened this morning: whilst we were at breakfast (the old trio) the door suddenly opened, and two sweet little prattlers ran into the room, the foremost crying, "I will see papa, because mama's gone out." A servant followed, and would have pulled them back; the young ones cried aloud at the attempt she made to take them out. Never was man more confounded than my father; the tremor that seized him was visible; his hands shook (the rattling of the tea-cups proclaimed it) his teeth were closed; at last, this affectionate exclamation burst from his lips.----
 "Hey day, Jane! why do you let the little toads trouble me here?" "Oh, fye, Sir! said I; how can you be so cruel? Won't you come and kiss me, my pretty dears?" The eldest threw his arms about my neck, and kissed me a thousand times. Sir George whispered me, "Oh, I could murder the little rogue for the liberties you indulge him in. Grant me but such bliss for one quarter of an hour, and then tell me whether my caresses would be less pleasing." "Fool" cried I, in
 a low

a low voice, pushing him from me with my elbow, "drink your chocolate."

The children now engaged all my attention; "Won't you love me, my little darlings? Won't you love your sister?" "Yes, dearly, dearly," said my little orator, and kissed me again. "Tell papa, Billy will be a good boy." At that name a tender idea, Fanny, would rush upon my mind; it called forth a sigh, "Can you, Sir, said I, refuse the little pleader's petition," carrying him to him; but the disconcerted unfeeling father flung himself out of the room, and their mother's return soon robbed me of my pretty companions. They are sweet boys; I felt my heart attached to them, and wished them the offspring of a more deserving mother.

At their departure, my situation became not the most eligible; Sir George took a chair and placed it next me; looked upon me with eyes that expressed not much delicacy, or modesty; he rose suddenly and walked out of the room; I took advantage of it to attempt my escape; he saw my design, and shut the door. "A cup of tea, if you please, Miss Walbrook; you will not refuse me so trifling a favour, though you will not grant to my desires favours I would die to obtain;" and without the least hesitation, he clasped his odious arms about me, and almost smothered me with his nauseous kisses. "You do not dislike *them*, said he; it is only the *object*. Do you think I could see you bestow

bestow such blessings on a little insensible rascal, and remain unmoved?" My hands and feet were all I could command of my person; (for he possesses a giant's strength) the former I applied to his cheeks, the latter to his shins, which I believe were much wounded in the scuffle. I was, at that moment, actuated by no principle of compassion. At last, I rescued myself by a means unthought of before by any girl in my situation; I was so enraged, that had I killed him, I should have thought I had done a meritorious action; his lips continued still close to mine, it was impossible for me to move my head; I gave his lip such a bite, that I verily believe my teeth met. He screamed, and threw me from him. "What would the little witch be at! Would you kill me, Madam?" "Yes, Sir, with all my heart, if you persist in treating me thus insolently." "Remember, continued he, I will not be treated thus, without a reward proportioned to the punishment." I did not stay to hear more, but took shelter in my closet.

Five o'clock.

Have seen only Collins since, who served me up a boiled chicken. She tells me, vengeance is declared against me, at her master's return, for my treatment of his friend, who has suffered much from my behaviour to him.

Nine o'clock.

They are returned. I am summoned
Heaven

Heaven assist me ! My heart dies within me. Oh ! my dear Fanny, did Marchmont know what I feel at this moment, would not his assisting hand be extended to succour me ? My spirits cannot last much longer. For fear of accidents, before I go down, I will deposit this with Susan.

Adieu ! I'm called again—My head turns round, my heart flutters---Once more adieu ! adieu !

LUCY WALBROOK.

L E T T E R XVI.

To the s A M E.

OH ! what a trial was I reserved for, and what anguish have I endured since Monday, when I wrote my last ! I went down, I saw my father and Sir George : the latter had a black plaister on his lower lip, but in neither of their looks could I read any compassion for me. I was determined, if possible, to appease my father's anger by my submission. I threw myself on my knees, but he spurned me from him, bade me, in a stern manner, rise, and answer the interrogations he had to make me. I obeyed. He held a letter in his hand. " You are an artful girl, said he ; your creatures are detected, your secret correspondences seized ; but preparatory to the letter I have in my hand, tell me who that young fellow is, whom Collins
saw

saw with you at that canting hypocrite's Hammer's." "Mr. Hammer, Sir, is no hypocrite; the other was a gentleman." "Equivocating huffey! his name I want to learn." "I should imagine, Sir, it can be of no great consequence to you to know, nor any to me to conceal his name; it was Marchmont." "He professes a mighty violent passion for you, does he not?" (sneeringly.) "No, Sir." "'Tis false." "Then, Sir, I'll remain silent, if you please." "Insolent!—Do you not love him?" "Yes, Sir," "Don't you think you act the part of a very indiscreet girl?" "No, Sir, I am happy that all who know my story, approve my conduct." "And condemn mine, you would insinuate." "That, Sir, is as you are pleased to construe it." "Your impertinence provokes my patience." "Tell me, Sir, what shall I do to prove my obedience? There is but one thing, you can command me, in which I will not most readily—" "Yes, but in that one point I insist on your obedience, dispose of yourself afterwards as you please. You would have been with your lover ere this, had not I timely intercepted your letter." "With my lover, Sir! (for I could not guess what he alluded to) this is cruel, indeed; I swear to you, upon my honour, that I never did write to, or receive a letter from any gentleman whatsoever." "Read then the superscription of this letter, and, if thou hast any modesty in thee, blush at the detection."

I read

I read it, the hand was Marchmont's, it was addressed to me. "It is his hand writing, I confess, Sir; but I am a stranger by what means it came, as well as to its contents. Let me read it, Sir, and perhaps I may be able to explain it." He smiled ironically upon me, and then glancing his eyes on the letter, continued, "Yours eternally, Marchmont." D—n such deceit," and popped it into the fire. I made an effort to take it out, but was prevented. I burst into tears. *Yours eternally!* Oh, Fanny, the tender expression sunk into my heart, it almost overcame me.

Sir George, all this while looked mighty silly. "Indeed, Sir, said he, though I have no reason to boast of Miss Walbrook's tenderness to me, yet let me entreat you to soften your resentment; you see how much she is affected; perhaps time, and my endeavours, may soften her heart in my favour; though at the same time, I must tell her, I never will resign my claim, while it is honoured with your approbation." "I thank you, Sir, for your friendly intentions, said I; but that you may not form any hopes on my future compliance, I here declare I never will be yours. Have you not sworn yourself another's, and, by a crime that cannot be paralleled, robbed her of her virtue? Destroyed the peace of an amiable family? De-luded the unhappy victim a while, with the mean hope that you would repair her injured honour, by entering into the most solemn en-gagements,

gagements, which you never designed to keep? Heaven saw her sufferings, snatched her from the author of her ruin, and left him at large, to pursue every vice his base soul is capable of. I knew the unhappy Charlotte well; from her own lips I received her affecting story. Yet she loved you, base as you were; and let me tell you, Sir George, that there is a Supreme Power, whom you disown, who can in a moment plunge you into torments infinitely greater than those you inflicted on my unhappy friend, or can on me! My heart you cannot incline to guilt."

My father flew to me, and with a blow from his clenched fist, which I received on my temple, levelled me to the ground, for I had been all the while standing.

Susan, whom I have seen but once since the detection of the letter, related what happened to me after. I lay, above an hour, to all appearance dead. My father expressed some concern, but did not tell the cause that brought me into such a situation; the servants all believed I had fallen into a fit, which, in honour to the author of my misfortunes, I shall not contradict. The blow was so violent, that the blood gushed from my mouth and nose in torrents, so that I became a hideous spectacle.

I was blooded and put to bed. Sir George himself carried me to my chamber, but retired instantly. In about an hour after he returned, gazed upon me with much seeming compassion, kissed my hands a thousand times,
and

and Susan says he wept over them. It was not till about the middle of the next day that I began to have the least recollection of what had passed. I was often delirious, and called on some strange gentleman named Marchmont; perhaps, I did. Oh! Fanny, vain, indeed, were my cries; I had no kind friend, but poor Susan. Oh, my father; why did you heighten your cruelty by showing me only the superscription of his letter, and then give to the flames, before I could peruse the contents. "Yours eternally, Marchmont," was all I heard; but was not that enough to bid me hope? Yes, I will hope—But when hope is deferred, as the proverb says, "It maketh the heart sick."

But to return to my story. My father and his virtuous companion, as soon as they found me getting better, left me, and are gone to the races, which will detain them several days. As soon as I am able to hold up my head, I will devise some means to escape my prison. I have wrote to my uncle, to inform him of my situation; perhaps he may rouse himself to do a generous action, and plead for me with my father; but he could never love him for his treatment of my excellent mother. My aunt, on no occasion, ever professed herself my friend, especially since she thought a certain person interested himself in my welfare; she would be glad of his attendance, I suppose, in quality of a *cicisbeo*. Her mind; how unlike my dear Harriet's! were she there I should not want a friend to plead my cause. I hope
she

she and her deserving husband are safely landed at their desired haven, and that she has been received by his friend with an affection due to her merit. I hope too the next spring will restore her to us again. The finishing this scrole has exhausted my spirits, so that I must add no more than that I am ever yours,

LUCY WALBROOK.

P. S. My faithful Susan waits to deliver it to the post.

L E T T E R XVII.

To the S A M E.

My Fanny !

MY father is returned ; his fortune—his daughter—were both risqued on a horse, that failed the first heat ; five thousand pounds gone for ever ! This loss urged him to risque another sum, of equal value—He was still unsuccessful—Sir George proved the winner. Debts of honour must be immediately cancelled. His ruined fortune could not raise the sum—The instant sale of his daughter then, was his receipt in full !—My father appeared before me, horror in his looks ; the successful Barclay by his side. “ Oh, Fanny ! said he, there is but one way left to save your father from grief and shame ; his rashness has been his ruin. All is lost, if you refuse your hand here,” taking hold of Sir George’s. “ Let to-morrow morning crown
your

your nuptials; your kneeling father begs it—your refusal now will force him to do a deed, that may embitter all your future days.” I could not reply. He took my hand, which he joined to that of the vilest man. “Take it, Sir George, and do not render yourself unworthy of it.” He pressed it to his lips. “To morrow morning, Sir George, shall make it yours for ever.” “But do you think, Mr. Walbrook, said he, that *marriage* is necessary to complete my happiness? Did it add to yours, Sir?—I take the lady—acquit you of your debt---and so all is concluded. You are mine, charming Lucy, by your own consent;” He embraced me. Horror iced every vein, I fainted away: the wretch was assiduous to restore me. My father retired: I was carried to my chamber. As soon as I recovered a little, I wrote thus far.

In continuation.

Does heaven require, my dear Fanny, that we should out-live the loss of honour!--My head is distracted! Whilst reason and strength befriend me, I never will submit to embrace pollution---But to save my father from poverty and ignominy, I will be his the first moment he shall demand me. It may be ere the setting of another sun! To the protection of heaven, I commit my cause. The monster approaches. I can no more. My hope is fled! Fanny, I am undone! Pray for me; oh, pray for your wretched Lucy!

L E T.

L E T T E R XVIII.

From Mr. MARCHMONT to CHARLES
LEWSUM, Esq.

Stoke.

OH, Charles, Charles! eight days, with the utmost anxiety, did I wait for an answer from my dear Lucy, to acquaint me what method I ought to proceed in. At length arrived the minister of fate—Two letters came by the same post, so that one must have been some time detained; her brutal father intercepted mine to her—It was burnt before her eyes.

Lewsum, how my soul shudders at what I have to relate!

She supplicated him for mercy; she laid before him, in a most affecting manner imaginable, the miseries that must ensue, should he persist in his designs of marrying her to the vilest of his sex. With a resentful blow he felled her to the earth. For many hours she was deprived of life: in this situation, these compassionate friends leave her to the protection of the cursed Collins, for several days, which they pass at the races. The father loses ten thousand pounds to Barclay—His daughter, my dearest Lucy, is to acquit him of the obligation: to save a father, she consents, Oh, Charles, to what? to be his wife—The villain rejects the offer of wife; as a mistress he embraces the treasure. De-

VOL. II.

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struction

struction overtake the wretch ! But I will pursue him, and, if I am not too late, rescue the lovely victim from dishonour—if the Almighty assist my endeavours ! But I have no hope. All attempts will be to late. Ere this, she is married—or—Oh, heavens ! dishonoured !—Either will prove the ruin of the best of woman, and of thy

MARCHMONT.

L E T T E R X I X .

SIR GEORGE BARCLAY TO RICHARD
MORLEIGH, Esq.

H A D I, Dick, given myself up to study that idle doctrine of a future state, and the rewards and punishments, which persons tell us will be inevitably bestowed on the just and the unjust, annihilation would be now all I would solicit from that being, whom timid souls acknowledge to be the sovereign dispenser of good and evil. Morleigh, the deed once done—it cannot be recalled—the blood, once iced, can never again flow through its accustomed Channels; so the mind, grown callous by guilt, can feel no remorse; else would thy friend look on what has passed with horror—and yet was I to be arraigned at *thy* tribunal, thou wouldst pronounce a gracious pardon? the laws of libertinism would approve my deeds—but the laws of Heaven—
what

what the plague's the matter with me? how I ramble!

Thus then it was: At —— races, Walbrook's genius failed him: my devil had the ascendancy, and ten thousand pieces of gold were forfeited to me, on the failure of two horses. I knew his shattered fortunes could not acquit him of the sum. I urged his daughter's beauty; said that her kind compliance should be his discharge; he saw not into my designs. At our return he laid before her the story of *his* misfortunes, and *my* generosity. The duteous maiden, touched by her father's tears, made not the least opposition to his wishes. To preserve *his* peace, she sacrificed her *own*, by a promise, that the next morn should make her mine; but the unwillingness, with which she made the offering, somewhat abated the fierceness of my desires.

To give ten thousand pounds for a wife, and that an unkind one too, was too bitter a pill to digest. However I received her offered hand with rapture; swore that every hour of my future life should be devoted to her charms; that love, unfettered, antimatrimonial love, should crown the hours, and every day prove happier than the former. That on no other terms, as things were situated, should she be mine. She was petrified with horror; I attempted to clasp the affrighted maid in my arms, but she sunk at my feet; the father rushed out of the room, and ex-

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claimed;

claimed, "Gracious God! this punishment is just." My fair was carried to her room insensible, I followed her. Our ears were soon struck by the report of a pistol. Mad as the Cumean maid, she burst from me; I pursued her to the place, from whence the sound proceeded; we reached her father's library, there we beheld him expiring; *one* pistol lay on the table, the *other* by him; his dying eyes once more opened to behold his daughter; she fell into his arms. She cast a look upon me; such a look! Morleigh, as froze every drop of blood in my veins. I, the supposed triumphant Barclay, would, at that moment, have been glad to have changed situations not only with my spotless beauty, but even with her now humbled father. At the spectacle, I found before me, I wanted that inward support, I till then had thought a jest. Could I have prayed, it would have been too late to have had the fatal deed recalled; a few rash words unsaid—It was too late, damp horror chilled my blood! I sunk on my knees; but whom had I to address? The being I denied, appeared a childish folly to supplicate.--I started up. The house-keeper Collins, was the first who had heard the report of the pistol; the hardened creature clasped her hands and exclaimed "I thought what that girl's obstinacy would bring her poor father to; but, thank heaven her undutifulness is punished as it deserves. Come, Miss, get up, cried she, pulling her by the arm, your sorrow comes too late; The

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poor dear gentleman was always afraid you would drive him to this extremity." She inhumanly dragged the dying girl by the arm, for to all appearance she was so. "Stop, thou inhuman wretch! said I, nor thus basely triumph over miseries thou hast helped to occasion—Attempt some instant means for her recovery." I surveyed the unfortunate Walbrook, and found he was gone for ever.

I bore the daughter in my arms to the next apartment; my efforts to restore her were ineffectual, for a long time; my distraction was past utterance; not one self-approving thought to sooth my despair! Oh, Dick, what a hell of torments did reflection open to me! but it was too late.

I determined, as soon as the dear sufferer should return to life, to lay myself and fortune at her feet. Several days was I kept in suspense too painful to be conceived, before her reason returned; with *that* her hatred for me likewise returned; the lowest prostration I practised; with millions of oaths I vowed to attach myself to her through life. She cast her languid eyes upon me, "Oh, Barclay! said she, doubtless there is a Power above, who, though he is tender in his mercies, is tremendous in his judgments! Repent then, unhappy man, thy thread of life may be cut off, ere thou canst petition for mercy." Tears choaked her utterance.

Mrs. Collins entered; she saw me on my knees. "What, Miss, said she, do you still keep

keep up your haughty airs ? I can tell you, that, if you think of staying in *my* house, you must try to humble your proud spirit, and endeavour to make yourself useful whilst you *do* stay, for I'll have no idle creatures in *my* house. Your poor dear father—" and she fell a howling like a famished wolf, "God rest his memory ! See here, Miss, continued she, opening a roll of paper, which she had laid on the table when she entered—" "See here, Miss, read." She indignantly turned her eyes from the paper. "Why do not you look ? repeated she ; well then, I'll read for you. "Item, I give and bequeath "to my virtuous, faithful, and well-beloved "Jane Collins, all the effects I shall die possessed of, &c." She ran half the will through, and concluded thus. "These bequests I bestow on the said Jane Collins, as "a small testimony of her fidelity and attachment to me." The mother's jewels only were left for the future support of the daughter. 500 l. per year went to a very distant relation ; the estate being entailed on heirs male. When the insulting wretch had done reading, she resumed her former impertinence. "Well, Miss, why don't you look up, and be thankful for the good news I bring you ? I dare say the jewels are worth above 300 l. or more ; a very pretty fortune indeed, for a person who deserves so little as you do." "Begone and leave me, said Miss Walbrook ; take all, but let me never be insulted thus again ; the punishments,

punishments, that it shall please heaven to inflict upon me, I can bear without a sigh ; but to be subjected longer to conversation like yours, Mrs. Collins, might tempt me to act unworthy of myself." Then clasping her hands, and looking up to the clouds, (or perhaps the force of her imagination represented to her a region far beyond them) "Strengthen my heart, O God, in the cause of virtue ! Then shall I enjoy treasures, that you, poor woman, will one day wish to grasp, but in vain. Yet, I will pray for your conversion, Mrs. Collins—" Collins interrupted her, "Poor, Miss, you can scold—Well, scold on, child. Why, Sir George, turning to me, you are dumb." "I am indeed, said I ; your unparalleled assurance makes me so ; I will assert this injured lady's cause, and free her from oppression, will she put herself under my protection." "Why surely, said she, you would not marry her, after the disgrace that has happened in her family?" "By heavens, this very moment, would she honour me with her consent ; on my knees again, dear Madam, let me conjure you not to reject my suit." "What, said the afflicted beauty with streaming eyes, marry a murderer ? My father's murderer ? to preserve myself from penury ?" "Oh, Madam ! returned I, why do you load me with such unmerited reproaches ? I your father's murderer ! Was I not in your own apartment, when the fatal deed was done ?" "True, said she ; but

but did not the insult offered his child, in a moment, deprive him of reason—of life; and now would you, by this pretended humility, seek to extenuate your crimes? But it is too late; they are already registered in indelible characters—Let me tell thee again, that they are registered in the blood of your poor betrayed Charlotte; in the more recently shed blood of my unhappy father; do you want to add to the catalogue with a continuity of your guilt? If you persist, may the last horrid act of your life be wrote in the blood that flows round my heart!—Yes, it *shall* flow in a thousand different channels, ere it shall acknowledge so vile a monster in the character of friend, lover, husband.” This last cursed reproach stung me to the soul, and stifled every emotion of tenderness within me. I retired; Collins followed. She took care not to let the passion subside, with which she saw me agitated; she promised to assist me in any wish of my heart. As soon as the little vixen (for such I cannot now but call her) is better---but, Dick, she shall be mine---I must take care to conceal her from Marchmont’s pursuit; if that successful dog once gets her into his power, all hopes are at an end.

I, at first, apprehended the will might be a forged one, by the cunning Collins; but am sorry to tell thee it is too sadly real, and the amiable Lucy is for ever debarred of her right.

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The body of Mr. Walbrook was interred as soon as possible, after having passed the examinations usually made on those who seek a voluntary retreat from their cares in the grave. His examiners were humane enough to pass an act of lunacy on the action; so that, you see, I certainly could have no hand in the affair.

Collins's future behaviour to her late mistress is to be very affectionate; she is to make her an offer of her house, till she is married, or settled to her liking. I am to appear but seldom; my behaviour all respectful tenderness. We hope, in ten days, to convey her to town: till I have her there, I shall have continual fears of losing her; but, she is yet too ill to be removed.

The length of my letter has tired my fingers confoundedly.

Adieu!

GEORGE BARCLAY.

L E T T E R XX.

Mr. MARCHMONT to CHARLES LEWSUM, Esq.

I Travelled all night. I arrived at Parkmont about four in the afternoon. I enquired of a servant the state of the family. But first, I ought to have told you that I disguised myself as much as possible; a horseman's coat, a scratch wig, slouched hat, and bootstockings effectually answered the purpose.

pose. I feared a discovery from none but Barclay. Could I once get admission to my dear Lucy, I would defy them all; as I would hold myself ready to answer any demand her father should make on me, and pay the forfeited sum.

Well then, to return to my narrative, I asked the fellow if Mr. Walbrook was at home. "Lack a day! Maister; said he, I doan't chuse to answer questions; but things at the house go on sadly." "Prithee, friend, said I, do you know any thing of one Mrs. Susan, that lives there." "Mayhap I do, Maister; and she is the only person, but our young mistress, worth a four-penny halter. Our poor maister!—Heaven blefs us! he was a very bad man to be sure; but however, I'm glad the jury did not condemn his body to be buried in the cross-road, but brought in their verdict *non compos*." By this I conjectured that the unhappy man had wreaked his vengeance on himself. "Mr. Walbrook then is dead, I presume, friend." "Yes, Maister, as a herring, as the saying is, and buried too." I thanked him for his information, and told him how much he would oblige me to tell Mrs. Susan, that a person would be glad to speak with her.

Mrs. Susan soon appeared; she was the same person who I told you in a former letter, introduced me to Miss Walbrook's closet, "You cannot possibly, said I, know me so well as I do you. You love your young mistress,

mistress, do not you? You must love *me* likewise as being her friend, and tell me in what situation her health is." "That I may do, said she, without any breach of trust," and she fell a crying. "Oh, Sir, said she, she is almost beside herself; her troubles are too much for her poor spirits to bear. For a night and a day after my unfortunate master's death, she was in continual fits. His cruelty had made her very weak before, and she is now scarce able to sit in her chair." "Could you not, my friend, get me a sight of her, unknown to any body." Lord, Sir! replied she, staring, how can you have such a thought? What! a strange man!" "Strange as I may appear to you, Mrs. Susan, yet she would be glad to see me, I'm sure. Did you never hear her speak of one Marchmont?" "Marchmont! Marchmont! muttered she, sure you can't be the blessed gentleman, my lady talks of so much! she said, he was a very handsome gentleman." "Without my disguise, perhaps, I may appear in a more favourable light to you; but in this dress, dear Mrs. Susan, you must introduce me to her." "That I would do instantly, could I but believe you. Mrs. Collins is not well, and is laid down. Sir George has been from home since yesterday." "Dear Susan you may trust me any where; come, lead on." She answered not, and we proceeded. Who, that never was in a situation similar to mine, can form an idea of

of the variety of emotions that assailed me? they almost choaked me.

At length we arrived at her chamber door; it was opened, unperceived by her—her head was rested on a pillow, that lay on a table by her. She sighed heavily. Susan advanced, “A gentleman, Madam, would be glad to see you; I have ventured to bring him up.” “Why did you, said she, in a low voice, at this time impose such a task upon me?” “Why, Madam, he said that he had something to say to you about Mr. Marchmont.” “Of Mr. Marchmont!”—She stopped, put her handkerchief to her eyes; then let it fall—“Tell—” said she.—I advanced; my whole soul was dissolved in tenderness and woe; I beheld the face of the sweet sufferer, so altered by the miseries she had undergone, that had I seen her in any other place, it would have been impossible for me to have known her. “Oh, Marchmont!” said she—and sighed again. I could contain myself no longer—“Best beloved of my soul, he is here!” She turned her languid eyes—she saw me, and shrieked; “Oh, no, it is not he—Why this intrusion, Sir?” She knew me not. “Can—can—my lovely Lucy, said I, in a faltering accent, can she call this an intrusion? Will she regard her Marchmont as an intruder?” I dropped on my knees before her; I threw my arms around her; Heavens! can it be?” said she. “Then—she could say no more. “I am, I am thy Marchmont, Lucy;

Lucy ; bless me with one kind look." She grasped my hand ; she was unable to speak ; a cold sweat bedewed her face ; she ceased to breathe. In an agony of despair I pressed her to my throbbing bosom ; I was hardly able to support her. By the help of some drops and a shower of tears, she recovered. " Ah, why," said she, looking upon me with her sweet eyes streaming, " did you venture thus far, to see a creature, whose only portion is misery ? You have learned, no doubt, the fatal catastrophe—the horrid sight still haunts me ! Oh, my friend ! had you but seen my father weltering in his blood ; the instrument of death clenched in his hand ; the author of our ruin looking exultingly on, bidding me be of comfort ! It is but in the hope of my future gratitude, that I am permitted to dwell a few days longer in my late father's house ; another now possesses it ; the woman who has proved his ruin and mine—she alone enjoys the small remains of fortune, his indiscretion left." " Thank God ! thank God ! said I, as it is now in my power to tell you of the sincerity of my passion. Let me, in my arms, instantly convey you from this hated house. I have a chaise in waiting, at the end of the road, to conduct you to your dear Fanny's—It shall be ordered here immediately to attend you ; your Susan likewise will accompany you. Come, my best love ! do not hesitate ; should Barclay, on his return find me here—" " Ah ! do not
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urge it, said she, sighing; let ruin come, I am prepared to meet it. Death will soon relieve me; his healing hand will extinguish all my cares." "Then, dearest Lucy, you do not love me. Have I deceived myself into a vain hope? Had you but seen my letter, it must have informed you of my love—my truth—my tenderness—and the joy I felt, when I flattered myself I had it in my power to rescue you from misery."

"Were my present fortunes such, said she, as when I was first thrown in your way, I would not hesitate to tell you how much I could—" She stopped. "Nay, do not stop, returned I; say *what* you could: keep me not in this cruel suspense." "I could then have told you (she spoke with her lovely eyes cast down) that, possessing your esteem, I could have renounced the whole world besides." "And why, my dearest life, cannot you tell me so now? Now there is no obstacle to prevent our mutual happiness." Every thing, said she, opposes it now; the gifts of fortune were not then withdrawn; my family's honour was then untainted; and think you that, thus dishonoured, or rather thus beggared, I could consent to receive benefits that my poverty never can repay? Leave me, then, Sir, I conjure you, to the protection of the disposer of all events; on his mercy is all my reliance." "Never, by heaven," returned I, in a determined tone, "will I leave this place, till I am dragged a senseless coarſe
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from your feet, unless you accompany me. Can you refuse me, when the most abandoned of men is, I doubt not, hourly waiting the moment that shall compleat your ruin? Can you tamely submit to be indignantly turned from your father's house by an infamous prostitute, who is his abettor in all his vile plots? If you refuse to go, I will stay with you then; I will guard my angel from their vile machinations: life to me is no longer valuable than whilst it is employed in your service." She wept; her sighs rent my heart; she called upon Susan; the honest girl threw herself on her knees, entreating her to follow my advice; that no time was to be lost; Mrs. Collins might come up, or Sir George—

"Heaven direct me, said she, to do what is right! My poor, weak head, (putting her hand to her forehead) is unequal to the task." "Let your friend, your lover, then, direct the road to happiness." "Oh, Sir! said she, my heart feels but too forcibly the power of your rhetorick." "Give way to its impulses then, my dearest Lucy; let me conduct you instantly out of the house. I see there are others in the village, where you may rest, if you are too much exhausted to support the fatigue of the carriage. Come, dear, good Susan, your lady's cloak." She opposed it not, but sate weeping. The girl obeyed, and packed up a few trifles in an instant.

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I gently raised her; she attempted to stand, but her feet refused their office; she sat down again in an agony of woe. Her countenance how pathetic! Her second attempt succeeded better; I supported her in my arms, through a long passage; but when she came to a door, which we found open, she rushed from me, flew into the room, and sunk down upon her knees. "Oh, my dear, blessed mother, cried she, clasping her hands, if you are now permitted to look down upon the sufferings of your distracted child, pity my despair; and tell me, oh! tell me, what I ought to do?" She looked wildly on all sides, and thus continued: "It is the last time I ever shall behold the apartment, wherein you first taught me the beauty of virtue: here I swear I never will violate your sacred counsels. Heaven protect and bless me! Bless also the guardian of my honour, to whose care I now commit myself!"

She said no more; but presented me her hand; I conducted her down stairs. As she came by the parlour, she wrapped up her face, and hurried by: "There! there! exclaimed she; 'twas there he lay expiring; may the Almighty extend his mercy!"

With great difficulty I conducted her to a farm about five hundred yards from her house.

Through fatigue, she again fainted away. Our kind hostess proposed her being laid upon the bed, which was done. A servant

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was dispatched for the chaise. In about three-quarters of an hour she grew better; Susan came loaded with bundles, and we set off. We got as far as B—n, which was about nine miles; and whilst my dear girl is endeavouring to rest, I have scribbled thus far.

Her afflictions are yet too recent in her mind, she is too much disturbed by them, for me to plead my passion, more than suffices to assure her of the eternal obligations I am under, for this instance of her confidence in me: yet I do not despair, but that, when time has mellowed her griefs, I shall be happy in the possession of her incomparable heart. A beam of joy darted itself over her pallid countenance, when I informed her of my father's returning goodness to me.

The midnight bell warns me to retire. The fatigues of body as well as mind, which I have undergone, give me the same warning. Can it be real, or is it only the effect of a raised imagination, that my lovely Lucy Walbrook, delivered from the hands of her enemies, sleeps in the next chamber? that she will be mine? that no obstacle can henceforth intervene? Oh, the tumultuous joy! If I go to bed, it will predominate over the powers of sleep. Adieu. Let the next post tell me you wish me happy; and believe me yours.

MARCHMONT.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXI.

Sir GEORGE BARCLAY to RICHARD
MORLEIGH, Esq.

YES, Morleigh, I had like to have been a lost man, absolutely determined on a reformation, to win the affections of one, I thought the best of women---Curse her, she has robbed me; I will have vengeance proportionable to the loss. 'Tis of herself, Morleigh, she has robbed me --her charming self.

My agent, Collins, at my return (for I had spent two days abroad) was the first to acquaint me with her elopement. But of the means she could tell me no more, than that she was seen at a farmer's house, with a very clumsy-looking fellow; but nobody can tell me the route they took; they went off in a post-chaise. I shall leave this place in the morning; at best, it is but a solitary one; but stripped of its only ornament, it has no longer charms for the disappointed

BARCLAY.

P. S. I shall come to town for a few days, and then for the country again. I doubt not, but I shall find her at her old friend the parson's---Perhaps her uncle may condescend to receive her---a good thought, by Jove! I will renew my acquaintance with Lady Crawford; she

she is not a woman of savage virtue; the fitter for my purpose. Dick, give me joy, she is — she shall be mine; She cannot escape me, unless the insinuating, vigilant Marchmont has her—and if he has, may she not be mine also? Marchmont, I defy even thee to thwart the determination of my heart. Once more,

adieu !

Parkmont, Thursday night, 11 o'clock.

L E T T E R XXII.

Miss W A L B R O O K to Mrs. A R C H E R.

Stoke.

MY dearest Fanny, has brought down my story to the period in which I now address you; and that I am permitted to do so, my thanks are due to heaven first; next to that first duty, I only wish now for life, to convince my dear Marchmont of my gratitude—nay, my Harriet, led me add, my love; is it too fond an epithet? Erase it then from my *letter*, and let the secret be read only in my *heart*. But, surely, it cannot be an offence to the severest virtue, to confess a regard for tenderness, for merit like his. How has his soul been oppressed, when he thought my life endangered from the insults I had received! how exquisite his joy, when my returning health permitted me to tell him, that

that to see him happy was my heart's supremest earthly wish ! Did not a retrospect of my past misfortunes cloud my present sunshine, I should be too happy ; yet, in pity to my Marchmont, are my sighs suppressed.

It is now near three months, that, without the least interruption, my happiness has been hourly encreasing ; my fears of Barclay, nearly allayed, as I have heard nothing of him. My uncle, as soon as my health permits, will fetch me ; he is kindly determined, that my dear William shall receive me from his hands alone ; my lady is silent on the subject.

Mr. Lewsum, the friend of *my best* friend, is with us ; next his Lucy, (as he is pleased to say) the beloved of his soul ; a man, nevertheless, of a singular character. Some years ago death robbed him of an amiable woman, on the third day of their marriage ; ever since, he has been blind to the allurements of beauty, and dead to the emotions of love ; and now wraps himself up in a cold indifference towards the whole world, except his friend. He lives mostly in London ; but in so abstracted a manner, that his friends receive little benefit from his conversation ; reading, drawing, and music, employ his whole time.

Since he has been with us, he is often extremely low ; his friend endeavours to awaken him from his stupor ; he looks down, blushes, hesitates, and retires. How much, my dear Harriet, is this young gentleman to be compassionate ! It is visible, he struggles hard

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to conceal painful emotions; that will obtrude themselves.

Mr. Marchmont the *elder* has honoured me with a most friendly epistle; entreats me to lay aside, what he calls, my *too nice* punctilios, and give him a daughter he longs to embrace. I have made suitable acknowledgements for his goodness, but that event, my Harriet, shall be deferred till my mind is more strengthened, and the recollection of a dreadful circumstance a little subsided.

I will here conclude my letter; for should my *best* friend discover I had been so long employed, he would chide me for too close application to my pen.

Adieu then, my dear Harriet, that Archer may ever unite, the ardent, the respectful lover, with the affectionate, the worthy husband, is the wish of your faithful

LUCY WALBROOK.

Tuesday, 7 o'clock.

L E T T E R XXIII.

To the SAME.

WHEN I concluded my last to my dearest Mrs. Archer, I did not imagine my next would be wrote her from Woodbury. My uncle and aunt, on their return from town, called, and took me with them. Mr. Marchmont, was likewise favoured with a seat in the coach; Susan, is to follow. My aunt
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and Marchmont, on their meeting, to outward appearance, forgot their former *brulée*. Mr. Lewsum declined accompanying us, being much pleased with the country, and the philosophical conversation of our worthy Mr. Hanmer, to whom my obligations are eternal, as well as to my dear Fanny. Is it not strange, that she should abate of her affection for me, as I have never knowingly given her pain? Can it be possible that her heart should be alienated from me? She is dispirited. I have entreated to learn the cause of her dejection; I am not worthy of her confidence; my conversation is exchanged for the mournful yew hedges, that surround the garden; her father likewise is sensible of the alteration; he begged of me to tell him the cause; I was ignorant of it. I reproached Fanny with indifference; I accused her of deviating from those principles, we had ever acted upon. Had I offended her, I was ready to make her all the reparation in my power. She laughed at me, said it was only the effect of my jealous temper; that she had but one wish, and that was to see me happy; that she was in perfect health and spirits. I was sorry to accuse her of insincerity, for I saw a shower collecting in her eyes, so my enquiries ceased; but my uneasiness continued; I imparted my fears to Marchmont; would you believe me, Harriet? he had the insolence to smile at them. "You smile, Sir, at my apprehensions!" "I do, my sweet girl; does not your
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your penetration lead you to a discovery of the cause of your friend's dejection?" "No, on my honour, said I, you will oblige me to acquaint me with your suspicions." "Excuse me, said he; should my conjectures be ill-founded, they would meet with your resentment." "Pshaw, never fear that." "Not fear it! said he, I have no other fear." "Nonsense! Do, dear Sir, tell me this, I never will be more inquisitive." "Not, unless you reward me in a manner equal to so important a discovery." "Every thing, returned I, you may command, so you relieve my curiosity." "Tell me then, my charming Lucy," clasping me rudely in his arms, "when shall be the happy hour, that you will begin to exercise your despotic power over me, in quality of a wife?" "Begone, Sir, (breaking from him) keep your secret, and may my absence punish your temerity! I'll see you no more to day, depend upon it. I did not stay to hear his answer, but I perceived his countenance was heightened by a smile. So you see how lightly he takes my anger.

I fear Sir Thomas cannot live long; a consumption has made vast ravages in his constitution, since last you saw him; but he himself does not seem in the least sensible of his approaching dissolution.

After he had rested one night, we all left Stoke, except Mr. Lewsum, as I told you before; the journey could not be unpleasant, where

where my dear Marchmont's eloquence was displayed. When we passed the spot (happy spot shall I call it ?) where first I heard the sounds of his persuasive voice, a variety of emotions assailed me; tears started into my eyes; I could not account for the cause; yet it almost overcame me. He perceived my distress, and tenderly pressed my hands. "My dearest Lucy," said he, looking kindly upon me, "I hope, does not regard this spot with regret, as it was here fortune first presented her Marchmont to her. Those tears, said he, I flatter myself, are not tears of sorrow." "No," was all I had power to utter. He raised my hand to his lips. Sir Thomas made him recount the particulars of the event; as you have heard them before, I need not repeat them.

On Monday I shall lose Mr. Marchmont, for a week or ten days: he goes to town; his presence is absolutely necessary to prepare for the approaching occasion. An old Lord Westbrook, a distant relation, is now on a visit to his father, who is in a weak way, which is the reason of his being recalled.

A beau is just arrived, who is to spend a month with us; his father gave him the name of Hartley, his sponsors that of Edward; his commission entitles him to the appellation of Captain; and so much for Captain Edward Hartley. I hope this will arrive time enough
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for the packet, which, I suppose, sails for your island on Wednesday.

Adieu.

LUCY WALBROOK.

L E T T E R XXIV.

Sir GEORGE BARCLAY to RICHARD
MORLEIGH, Esq.

Environs of Woodbury.

Oh, 'tis well!

The joys of meeting pay the pangs of absence,
Else who could bear it?

NO, not so fast as that neither—my genius has not yet procured me an interview: yet have my longing eyes once glanced at her charming person; her countenance glowed the soft beauties of a Madona, but her Atalanta-like feet soon robbed me of the charming sight.

Is it not necessary, before I proceed, that I should first inform you by what means I discovered this goddess in her retreat? Why, Morleigh, the easiest in the world: I knew that, whilst she remained with the old priest, all attempts would be vain; and that perhaps the vigilant Marchmont would send me and my schemes to the devil, should he find me unprepared for the attack.

I heard that Sir Thomas and Lady Crawford were in town; to my lady, who is a

woman of pleasure, I doubted not but I should soon introduce myself, at some public place. I succeeded, one night, at the opera. I told her ladyship how much my reputation had been injured in the world, by her relations. She was so obliging as to say she doubted not of my innocence, but that Sir Thomas vowed vengeance against me. I begged her ladyship to honour me with an hour's conversation in the Park, or wherever else she would appoint, as I was desirous to exculpate myself in her opinion. The Park was fixed on. I was true to the appointment, but no lady appeared; I grew impatient. A genteel-looking young woman accosted me, and demanding my name, gave me a billet. It was from my lady, who was prevented meeting me. The messenger I soon found to be her woman. My ambassador was fair hair'd, black eyed, and rosy lip'd; her complexion pleased me well. "The business, said I, you come to negotiate with me, demands a more retired place." I begged her to follow me; she unreluctantly obeyed: a hackney-coach, in a few minutes set us down at C—, for it began to rain. I amused her, for a while, with several subjects; at last I had the effrontery to ask her if she thought herself handsome. "No, Sir; but everybody says, that Sir George Barclay is quite a flatterer." Though it was morning, I called for wine, and obliged my fair envoy to partake of it. She was sweetly complying: suffice it to say, I detained her two hours.

hours. At her departure, she began to whimper out a few kind reproaches, but I pacified her by tossing a purse of gold into her lap. "Meet me here to-morrow, my sweet girl; I have a thousand things of importance to say to you; and an engagement drags me from you now." She promised—I was grateful; and so we parted for that time.

The next day she was true to her appointment. I told her that I had a scheme in hand, in which, if she would assist me, I would make her fortune. The foolish gipsy sobbed out, "Can you leave me so soon!" "No, my dear Debby, I will always love you, if you will help me in a piece of revenge I have been meditating. You know my story; your lady goes soon into the country; Miss Walbrook, I suppose, will be likewise there soon: cannot you acquaint me of the time of her arrival?" She promised, and has kept her word. Our interviews were very frequent, till she left town. I first thought of making the mistress my friend, but finding her *soubrette* so very *commode*, I dropped all thoughts of that scheme, as I think it too chimerical to succeed. Debby tells me her lady was very much in love with Marchmont, and is determined that nothing shall be wanting, even now, to separate them.

He is now in town, and I am lodged at a decent kind of hut; Jenkins my name; unsuccessful in business, obliged to shelter myself in the country from merciless creditors.

What a pity it is to fail in business! at my time of life too—about fifty-five! much troubled with the rheumatism! but I trust it will not be bad enough to detain me from the gardens of Woodbury, where it is usual, I am informed, for my angel to take an evening walk. My dearest life, you shall not walk alone. Till the expected event is over, I bid you adieu.

Memorandum. I shall have a chaise in waiting, to conduct me, and my sweet saint to town. I have made Debby as wicked as myself; but at the same time, I must tell you, I was not her first paramour.

GEORGE BARCLAY.

L E T T E R XXV.

From Mr. LEWSUM to WILLIAM
MARCHMONT, Esq.

I Wanted your advice, Marchmont. I left Stoke, and hastened to town to procure it; you were gone to Woodbury; the disappointment chagrin'd me.

I will ask you then, if you think it possible that the heart of Man can be twice susceptible of the same passion—the object changed? It is a weakness I thought my reason would never again acknowledge. My heart tells me my Lydia is no more; my heart likewise tells me her virtues live in Fanny Hanmer. You stare, and cannot express your wonder.
Perhaps

Perhaps so; but it is nevertheless true. Yes, my friend, her integrity, her humanity, her humility, have revived a passion in my bosom, I thought buried in my Lydia's grave. She still remains unconscious of the effects her amiable sweetness has had on me. Send me your advice. Think you a heart, once another's, is deserving of her? You know her worth. Let your answer find me at Stoke, for I have nothing to do but return there in a few days.

Adieu! and believe me yours

CHARLES LEWSUM.

London, Southampton-Street.

L E T T E R XXXI.

Sir GEORGE BARCLAY TO RICHARD MORLEIGH, Esq.

Z—DS, Dick! I'm born to be defeated in all my schemes; my devil is never constant to me. My attempt was too precipitate; detected by Hartley, (you know him) who is on a visit to Crawford. The dog got sight of me, notwithstanding my disguise, and obliged me to make a flying retreat. Remember I am disappointed but for a time; I ope to return to the onset again before the meddling priest has done his office.

Adieu for the present, thine, &c.

GEORGE BARCLAY.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXVII.

Mr. MARCHMONT to CHARLES LEWSUM, Esq.

AS I suspected, Charles ; the cause of your lowness of spirits I soon found out ; and that Fanny participated in your disorder. She is the woman I could wish my friend. Fortune will be of no consequence with you ; the endowments, with which she is possessed, are of infinitely more value. May you be as happy together, as I doubt not I shall with my Lucy ! her perfections hourly improve upon me ; every moment she becomes dearer to my heart. Lady Crawford is not her friend ; she would wish to inspire me with the passion of jealousy ; but, Lewsum, virtues that have stood trials, like hers, cannot admit of a doubt in the breast of thy Marchmont. From the moment of my arrival, her ladyship's insinuations commenced. I enquired for my Lucy ; she smiled contemptuously at my impatience, " Ask Captain Hartley." " Why, Captain Hartley, Madam ? Pray then direct me to him." " Perhaps in the Cypress-walk you may find them." I went as directed—I saw them walking—My Lucy spied me ; she flew from him—My extended arms received her—Joy, at my sudden return, almost made her breathless ; she looked the satisfaction her tongue could not express. The Captain welcomed my return. Barclay, was the first word my Lucy uttered.

" Oh,

“Oh, my friend! I have seen him; Captain Hartley has preserved me from ruin; he was in this very walk in disguise. The Captain asked him by what means he came there; his voice betrayed him; conscious of his base designs, he took flight before any bad consequences happened to Mr. Hartley or myself.”

This account has not failed to alarm me; next week, I hope, will make her mine for ever; till that blessed event it will be necessary she should not remain a moment without a guard. Myself will be that guard by day, and at night I will resign her to the protection of that Power she so faithfully, so fervently adores.

Adieu!

MARCHMONT:

Woodbury, Thursday night.

P. S. Lucy has wrote to engage her Patty to favour us with her company on the approaching happy occasion; and has the mortification to find the poor girl is extremely ill. She is much hurt at this disappointment; and, would you believe it, the dear perverse girl, would have me postpone my felicity till the recovery of her friend; but, no, Charles, I have given an absolute negative to that.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

Miss HANMER to Miss WALBROOK.

MY father and myself are making preparations for a second tour to the south of France, at the request of our excellent patron and patroness, Lord and Lady C——; their healths are both declining. At such a time, how unchristian would be a refusal! And at such a time, my friend!---but it must be so—My mind no longer enjoys that sweet composure it was wont, in those days, when my Lucy taught me the story of her love; I would have treated the passion as a chimera. My follies light on my own head---I would acknowledge---but confusion stops my pen--- Do not, my dear, even dare to guess at what I feel---I will conquer it. Mr. Lewsum is returned from London; how impertinent this intrusion! He attempts to make up to me, by his assiduities, for the loss of your conversation. He, and my father are now in secret conference. I think I hear him coming this way. Adieu, for the present.

In Continuation.

It was Mr. Lewsum; his eyes beamed uncommon joy. He took my hand---Why was I confused? Why did an universal tremor seize me? His behaviour so respectful! his conversation--- so—not unpleasing.

He ended smiling, and in Fanny's ear
So charming left his voice, that she a while
'Thought him still speaking---still stood fix'd to hear.
His

His soothing eloquence had such an effect on her heart, that she confessed---Ah, Lucy, what did she confess? 'Twas even this, that, "She of all "mankind could love but him alone." He will accompany us on our tour, or attend us soon after.

I expect your next will be quite in the matronic stile. Before we leave England, will send you my address; in four days we depart. Adieu, my dearest, best of friends! My Lucy Walbrook I shall behold no more; may the name of Marchmont more strongly cement our friendship! Your amiable husband will not be jealous of the connection. Say for me to him every thing that is due to his merit. Tell him, I shall expect a visit from him at the Spaw, accompanied by his charming wife. Again adieu! and believe me, my dearest Lucy, your faithful and affectionate.

FRANCES HANMER.

L E T T E R XXIX.

Mr. MARCHMONT to CHARLES LEWSUM, Esq.

L EWSUM, you are preparing to follow your charming mistress; success attend you!

But a few hours now lie between me and happiness---when my Lucy will be mine---mine by the most indissoluble ties---When, without a blush, she will gaze on her hus-

106 W O O D B U R Y.

band, and tell him that he is the lord of all her wishes ; when my fond soul shall tell her, with rapturous exultation, that she is my bride---my wife --my all of blifs ! Oh, Lewsum ! the tumultuous tide of joy overflows my heart, and prevents my adding more, than that I am the happiest of men, and yours most sincerely,

MARCHMONT.

Woodbury, Tuesday night, 10 o'clock.

Think of to-morrow.

L E T T E R XXX.

To the s A M E.

Woodbury, Wednesday morning 3 a'clock.

LEWSUM ! my happiness was but a dream ; the enchanted veil is withdrawn --I go from Woodbury, from mankind, from woman---My miseries are past redress ; seek not to learn the cause of them. Be yourself the messenger of my misfortunes to my father ; beg him to be of comfort, tell him it is the request, the prayer of that unhappy son, who causes his affliction ; but who, O Lewsum ! suffers more, much more. There is a fate in it ! My horses wait me. Can they carry me where horrors shall not pursue me ? Oh no---I go---Farewell.

MARCHMONT.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXXI.

Captain H A R T L E Y to Miss H A R T L E Y.

Woodbury.

YOUR last, my dear sister, was full of kind wishes for my valuable friends: The day which was appointed for the celebration of their nuptials is become a day of the most complicated distress, that the most lively imagination can represent to you. By eight o'clock we were all ready to attend the bride. She appeared in all the splendor of conscious innocence. The bridegroom appeared not; I sought him in his chamber, to hail the happy morn. I found a billet on his table, superscribed to Miss Walbrook. I presented it to her. Her eyes glanced over it. She fainted away. I took it up, the contents ran as follows:

B I L L E T.

“Ask your own heart the cause of my retreat, and cease to wonder.”

My friend, Sir Thomas, whose days are almost numbered, was not much less affected, than his charming niece. My lady appeared under very little concern; but all our efforts to recover the unhappy Miss Walbrook were useless. She was conveyed to her bed, and has not yet betrayed the least return of reason.

What an unforeseen and strange calamity is this! On whom shall we fix the blame?

Who

Who shall fathom the mystery? The scene, I have this day had before me, conveys an excellent lesson; It tells us not to place our affections on worldly objects; it tells us, that all our adorations are due to Omnipotence; that those fabricks of happiness, our imagination and desires raise for us, are unstable and transient; and that all our wishes should tend to assure ourselves of the protection of the Most High. You will say I am serious; the occasion demands it; the most unfeeling heart must have partaken of the lovely Miss Walbrook's sorrows. She must be innocent; Marchmont, no doubt, thinks himself so. The groom tells us he left Woodbury about three o'clock, but did not doubt his return by the morning, so that he thought no more of it.

Adieu.

EDWARD HARTLEY.

L E T T E R XXXII.

To the s A M E.

Woodbury.

MISS Walbrook's disorder, my dear sister, can admit of no relief. The complaint that's seated in the heart medicine cannot reach. Ten days are now past, since that fatal one, and not a ray of reason has she discovered; the approaches of death are strongly marked in her countenance. The uncle gazes, for a moment, on this expiring object, then re-
tires

tires, fast as his decaying strength will admit of; when alone, he gives himself up to despair. I would have left them last week, but his entreaties prevailed on me to afford him all the satisfaction in my power. Sir Thomas has just sent for me; he begins to be sensible of his approaching dissolution.

In Continuation.

He wished for me to assist him in settling his worldly affairs, which are very much confused. His niece, should she recover, would be left destitute of fortune, unless he makes a suitable provision for her. I cherished the thought; he is sensible that she will never receive any distinguished marks of tenderness from his lady. Four thousand pounds, he thinks, will enable her to settle genteelly in the world; after the disappointments she has sustained, splendor will scarce be desired. Life is precarious, and Sir Thomas's extremely so. I thought it prudent to summon the lawyers as soon as possible; to-morrow they attend.

Four o'clock.

Alas, my sister! the physician tells us there is no hope! And must so much youth, beauty, and (I doubt not) innocence, be thus suddenly torn from a world, to which she would have been so bright an ornament! Adieu, for the present.

E. HARTLEY.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

From the SAME to the SAME.

I Can now hardly wish this charming woman's recovery ; the distresses she has to encounter with, should she survive, rend my soul. Sir Thomas, her only hope, is no more ; the delay of the lawyers left his generous design unfinished. He expired in a fainting fit ; nobody thought his end so near. Miss Walbrook remains insensible of this loss ; her good lady-aunt seems sensible of the advantages she shall reap from it. He never was the man of her choice ; the title, he could confer upon her, was her only inducement, notwithstanding she appears as much afflicted as she can. As Sir Thomas was my friend, I cannot, consistent with decorum, prolong my stay, unless, she should much solicit it. Yet I could wish to render myself, in some sort, useful to Miss Walbrook.

Adieu !

E. HARTLEY.

P. S. We can yet learn no tidings of Mr. Marchmont ; his father is in the utmost affliction ; he is yet unacquainted with his address.

 L E T T E R XXXIV.

To the SAME.

Woodbury.

MISS Walbrook is, at last, pronounced out of danger ; yet her recovery proceeds

ceeds but slowly. Her aunt's mourning habit announced to her that her uncle was no more. She clasped her hands in an agony of woe, but spoke not; her maid indeed tells me she seldom does. Lady Crawford only waits for her returning health, to go to town; the country was ever her aversion. She is eager, I suppose, to make a display of her weeds in the *beau monde*.

I have seen Miss Walbrook. Heavens, what an emaciated form did my eyes behold! She read my astonishment in my eyes. "Why this concern, Sir, for one so lost as I am? My strength failed me, else you should not have beheld me the sad wretch I am. I have known sorrows, Sir—My heart is now steeled—they cannot more assail me. I trust my punishments are compleated here—Willingly I never did offend. Yet let me not presume to direct! perhaps it is good for me to be afflicted." I entreated her not to dwell on so painful a subject; my sister, I said, longed to embrace a lady, whom misfortune had endeared to her. She thanked me; but at the same time, assured me, she was unworthy of the generous offer. When they come to town, I flatter myself I shall perfect a friendship so much desired by my dear Maria. Any other woman, but my dear Miss Crofts, might express apprehensions, that this charming woman's sorrows would detach my heart

heart from her. But tell her 'tis hers, and only hers. The day, I hope, will soon come, when all barriers between us will be removed.

Adieu !

E. HARTLEY.

L E T T E R X X X V .

To the SAME.

Woodbury.

AH, my sister ! my dear Miss Crofts then accuses me of inattention ! May my presence banish her inquietude ! tell her on the wings of love I fly, to prostrate myself at her feet.

Yesterday Miss Walbrook left her chamber, for the first time, for an hour only. A rooted sorrow sat on her countenance ; her air was composed ; she talked but little, and that not by choice. I took the opportunity of taking leave of her, after having entreated the permission to introduce you to her, when she comes to town. She sighed, but refused me not.

The name of Marchmont has not yet escaped her lips ; not a single exclamation has burst from her, since her returning reason : I fear sorrow is too deeply rooted in her heart, ever to be eradicated. What can have occasioned it ? The more I reflect, the more I am puzzled. Her conduct was ever too uniformly discreet, to admit a suspicion of her prudence. Lost in a labyrinth of doubts, I
can

can determine on nothing. So adieu, and believe me yours affectionately,

EDWARD HARTLEY.

P. S. I write to my Caroline by this post, and have entreated her to fix my happy day. Be my advocate with the dear girl, that it may be a speedy one.

L E T T E R XXXVI.

Miss WALBROOK to Miss SOMERS.

MY dear Patty's letter tells me that my misfortunes have reached her; let an act of oblivion bury all past scenes. Be my troubles forgot; they shall not afflict my friends: I will bear them in my bosom, as faithful counsellors; *they* will not deceive; *they* will not delude me with false hopes. I have supplicated the Almighty to teach me to forbear all impious murmuring, and to instruct me in the cause wherein I have erred, and for which I have incurred my punishment.

My tender, my indulgent aunt (for you have heard of the death of my poor uncle) has just asked me, in what manner I shall dispose of myself, on my recovery: her house will be ever at my service, if I will prudently coincide with her request, which is, my Patty, to accept Sir George Barclay for a husband. As I am circumstanced, she thinks it is a very advantageous match for me. She has

has received a letter from him, soliciting her interest with me, and has assured him of her ready compliance with his wishes. Was this a time, my friend, to add to my despair? On my knees, weak as I was, I entreated her to protect me, and renounce his suit; telling her, that the horrors of the cruellest death were nothing to what I felt, at the thought of seeing him again. She told me I must either accept him, or forfeit her friendship for ever. The determination required not a moment's pause. All my supplicating remonstrances were rejected; she vowed to see me no more. I may stay with her till my health will permit me to remove; and what hospitable roof will then receive the forlorn

LUCY WALBROOK?

L E T T E R XXXVII.

To the s A M E.

Woodbury.

OH, Patty! the dreaded Sir George is arrived—Nobody shall compel me to see him—Nobody here shall controul me. I once had friends, but they are gone. Why will my tears fall at the recollection of them? Here is my aunt's impertinent woman; she will drag me to him—To whom? To Barclay! Oh, heavens! I go.

The

The wretch, when he surveyed my tottering, shattered frame, attempted to express a softness his heart never felt. A thought struck me, on going down, which I cherished. I treated him not uncivilly; my aunt expressed her approbation of my behaviour. I made my visit short, and retired, to give a loose to my griefs in my apartment. My faithful Susan is not yet dismissed; henceforth, my Patty, I must learn to serve—it shall be with all humility.

My resolution was soon taken. I devised with Susan means for our escape, for she would not let me depart without her. She got a poor labourer to go to M—— for a chaise, which was to be at the garden gate about midnight. I must here break off.

Ten o'Clock.

I begged to be excused going down to supper; how my head turns round!—how every limb trembles! But two hours more, and then I must throw myself on the mercy of a cruel world. Where, but in my Patty, shall I find a friend? where a virtue firm enough to receive the despised

LUCY WALBROOK?

P. S. Why do you reproach yourself that you have not an asylum to offer me?

L E T-

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

To the S A M E.

M-----

HERE, Patty, is the poor fugitive ! We arrived safe at M——, about five in the morning ; my fears gave me strength to support the journey amazingly. I lay down, whilst Susan called on a friend in the town, to enquire for a lodging for a few days, till I should be able to fix on some plan. I slept four hours. Alas ! I thought sleep a blessing enjoyed only by the happy ; yet for once, it afforded its healing balm to the afflicted. I awoke much refreshed. Susan had been returned some time : she procured a lodging, such as I have since had reason to approve, and from which I now write to you.

As you love me, keep my abode a secret ; let it not be known to your friends, that you still countenance a wretch, by all the world forsaken. To my dear Fanny I cannot write, as perhaps she is, ere this, become the wife of a man—who is the friend of ——.

Oh, Patty, I can no more.

Adieu !

LUCY WALBROOK.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

To the S A M E.

M-----

AH, my friend ! you inveigh like one that has not known affliction ; yet do
not

not execrate him, who was once my friend—
—nay my lover, Patty—a few hours more
would have rendered him still dearer to me !
the tender epithet of husband would then
have been allowed me. He is married, you
say ; at least it is so reported. Be it so ! I
can endure even that without a murmur ; no
complaints of mine shall discompose their
union. Silent anguish I have chosen for my
companion, and who will dare to wrest it
from me ?

• Oh, Marchmont ! it is the last time my
paper shall ever be stained by tracing thy
name ! I forgive thee ; from my soul, I for-
give thee, and mayst thou never learn the
pangs, thy infidelity has doomed me to feel !
In the billet, he left for me, he bid me ask my
own heart, the reason why he separated him-
self from me. I have asked my heart, and
cannot find it guilty of an infidelity.

A widow gentlewoman, about forty years
of age, a lodger in the house, has introduced
herself to me ; she has likewise known afflic-
tion : it is sufficient to endear her to me ; her
husband I once knew ; he was a lieutenant
in the navy, and was unfortunately drowned.
Her finances, I believe, must be low ; she has
one son, about eleven years old. I have
thought, my Patty, that, with her assistance,
(for I have learned her character is unexcep-
tionable) both may yet be as happy as those
can be, who are fallen from every hope. All
your endeavours to oppose me will come too
late,

late, as my designs will be fixed ere you read this. I have received from Woodbury all my remains of fortune ; it was directed to be left at the inn for Mrs. Bellamy, (the name of my new friend) till called for. When I wrote for it, I sent a letter to my aunt, couched in the humblest terms ; it was not honoured with an answer.

Mrs. Bellamy has a friend in town, to whom I shall consign my few glittering ornaments, the profits whereof shall be applied to our future support. Five or six hundred pounds, which is the most they will amount to, will enable me to enter on a new scene of life, under the direction of my new friend, who is a woman of extensive knowledge, with the farther advantage of an useful education.

I prefer my new scheme to that of serving : you would wish to learn what that scheme is. I intend to lay out my little stock to furnish a house and shop in the millenery way at B—, (Mrs. Bellamy being well known there) for the conveniency of those who come there to take the waters. Mrs. Bellamy has lived some years with a relation, who carried on the business, which will be a great advantage to us. I shall assume her name, which will be a means of my living in security, as my only terror is Barclay. My dress shall be so perfectly simple, that even you, my Patty, were you unexpectedly to behold me, should not know me. But adieu, for the present.

In

In Continuation.

It is three days since I began my letter. In a month I hope to be settled in my new state ; till then I once more bid you adieu !

LUCY WALBROOK.

L E T T E R XL.

To the S A M E.

B—.

HEAVEN, my friend, blesses my labours. I am now inured to my situation. The language of our little mode of traffick is become familiar to me ; my mind is, at last, humbled to a level with my fortunes ; time and my fervent prayers, have at length taught me the hardest of all sciences, that of forgetting what I have been.

Patty, there are resources in a virtuous mind, which will support it, in the severest hour of trial. I was calm and unmoved, when Mrs. Collins stepped from my late father's chariot, into my shop ; I even pitied and compassionated the unhappy woman, when I reflected that all the affluence around her was purchased at the vast price of her honour and reputation. In the humble shop-woman she discovered not the features of her injured mistress. At her appearance, I was affected a moment, lest she should discover me, but my fears were soon relieved. After
she

she had expressed a dislike of every thing I shewed her, she notwithstanding condescended to make several purchases. I received her money with the respectful gratitude becoming *her* dignity and *my* situation. The appellation of *young woman* was frequently addressed to me. I made up her packet, waited on her with it to her carriage, and she drove off. Health no longer sate on her countenance, a melancholy fullness loured in her eyes.

My poor Susan raved, when she learnt what had happened; she is still with me, nor could she be prevailed on to quit me; she vowed to expose her shame all over the town, but, at length, I prevailed on her to be secret, as it would only expose me, and make my retreat known.

Many old acquaintances have I served in like manner, and all have departed without having made the least discovery of me.

I think, in a former letter, I acquainted you, that, before I settled here, I wrote as polite a letter as I could, to Captain Hartley, to thank him for his friendly offers of introducing me to his sister; but as my letter bore no date, it could not be answered.

I have once wrote to my dear Mrs. Archer, but without acquainting her with the situation of my affairs; only hinted that a separation had happened between me, and ——. To tell her of her sister's cruelty would have been unkind. I have also a letter from her,
in

in which she tells me, she expects to return when her little daughter can, with safety, undergo the fatigues of the voyage.

A variety of avocations, at present, prevents my adding more, than, that I am yours. To you, my Patty, I may safely stile myself by the name of

LUCY WALBROOK.

Indeed *Bellamy*, is become so familiar to me that I sometimes think I have no right to any other. Mrs. Bellamy claims a large share in my friendship, for her unremitted endeavours toward the improvement of our little fortune, which accumulates beyond our hopes.

Casting my eyes to-day on the news papers, I there read the death of the father of him who has cruelly destroyed my peace.

L E T T E R XLI.

T O t h e s A M E.

B—.

I HAVE been ill, my Patty, some weeks, but not unto death; in secret I courted the gloomy tyrant; he stood aloof at my entreaties.

I am, at length, enabled, by the assistance of heaven, to pursue my shop; the fatigues I daily undergo, I find are too much for me. If a little paltry shop-woman may be suffered to speak of her benefactors, certainly the idlest of all people in the world resort to this place. I am called upon. Adieu, for the present.

VOL. II.

M

In

In Continuation.

The business of half the kingdom is often settled in a morning in my shop, by several ladies of quality, the most unmeaning and insipid of their sex. Every well dressed man that passes the window whilst they are with me, they are dying for. Oh! the sweet creature, where does he live, Mrs. Bellamy? What a figure these ruffles would make on his hands on a birth-night! "Oh, Lady Betty; did you see Sir Harry Bladon, last night? What a divine creature; 'Twas well for me, I was so much indisposed, that I declined dancing; or else I should have died to have been neglected." Thus much the honourable Miss Hornby. Lady Betty Garton replied; "Indeed, my dear Susan, I feel no kind of tremor, when I survey your redoubtable Sir Harry; Willoughby, Broughton, Dingly, and Clayton, infinitely outsoar him; besides they breathe the very odour of Paris, not ten days returned from that earthly heaven; and yet how far short do they fall, in every perfection both of mind and person, of Lord Westbrook! Oh! Hornby, that dear devil has quite robbed me of my heart; I never felt so violent a passion for any male creature in my life, as I do for his Lordship, though he came to town but three days ago. I hope he will allow me the pleasure of his hand, to-morrow evening, at the ball. Pray, Mrs. Bellamy, see that my things are uncommonly genteel.

genteel. Cou'dn't you step to my lodgings, to assist me in displaying my ornaments? That any body who dresses so extremely plain, should shew so much taste in the dress of others! You certainly, child, feel no such passion as envy." "Your Ladyship judges rightly, I have no ideas beyond the sphere in which I am placed." "Well, I declare I think you handsome (she was pleased to add) though, to be sure, you are monstrously pale; and then your eyes and the upper part of your face, are always concealed under that slouching hat." "My eyes, Madam, as they assist me in my business, are useful; they know no other task; my hat likewise shades the light from them, which is too strong for me when I have the head-ach, and that seldom leaves me." "Lady Betty, Lady Betty, cried one of the ladies, on my conscience, yonder goes the divine Lord Westbrook." Her ladyship rapped at the window; this boasted divinity entered. How shall I solve the ænigma?

Lord Westbrook and Marchmont were one.

Heaven strengthened me to support the shock. Though my distress was past utterance, I did not faint away, though, for a moment, my feet denied to support me. I sunk into a chair, my situation reminded me to arise, and in silence wait the commands of my betters. Every eye was too much engaged about him, to regard me, else might they have read my distress. I would have withdrawn, but unluckily my people were all out

on business. I trusted then to the alteration of my appearance, that he would not discover me. His dress was mourning; his hair in negligent disorder, his eyes had lost their wonted fire, which was succeeded by a soft languor; his countenance pale and thin; in short, he was much altered, but his voice was still the same as when he first beguiled me of my foolish heart. Oh, my dear friend! at the sound of that perfidious voice, ten thousand horrors darted through my mind. How vainly had I imposed on myself, to think I could look on him with indifference! The variety of emotions that assailed me, let those, who have felt like me, forgive and pity.

He addressed them severally, but with an air of distance and respect; they artfully introduced the intended ball; he, at once, damped their hopes, by telling them, he proposed not appearing in public, whilst he staid.

He was going to take his leave, when Lady Betty said he must not go, till he had given his opinion of some French ruffles just arrived. "Mrs. Bellamy, why do not you shew them to his Lordship?" "In compliance with your Ladyship's commands, said he, I will look on them; though, indeed, I am no connoisseur in those matters; but if your Ladyship approves them, they must be elegant." With trembling hands I presented them to him. I held down my head. I staid

fled my sighs. The tears rolled down my
 checks, which, unperceived, I wiped away.
 He approved the ruffles, or pretended to do
 so, and Lady Betty set a price upon them,
 which his Lordship, or Marchmont, (for
 yet I could not tell what to make of the story)
 paid into her Ladyship's hands, and she into
 mine. The ladies took their leave, as did
 his Lordship. Mrs. Collins paid me a second
 visit, and was stepping out of the shop,
 when his Lordship returned for his pocket-
 book, which he had left unperceived by me;
 he seemed to recollect her features, threw
 himself into a chair, leaned upon his hand,
 and sighed; that sigh was echoed by one
 from my breast. I feared to catch the in-
 fection, should I stay longer. I thought, at
 that moment, of his *wife*; and *virtue* bade
 me retreat. He perceived I was going, called
 for a bottle of essence, and asked me if I
 could tell who that person was who left the
 shop. I replied, she was a stranger, I believ-
 ed; but in so low a voice, that he did not
 discover me. He then sat silent, and sighed
 again; I took advantage of it, and slipped into
 the parlour to send Mrs. Bellamy to him, for
 she was just returned. I was no sooner got
 there, than I heard his step. I turned round,
 and met him at the door; he had a book in
 his hand that he had taken from the window.
 It was a volume of Moliere's plays, which
 had been his own; in the beginning of it,
 he once had wrote a quotation from Milton,
 which

which he addressed to me, when he presented me the book.

With thee conversing I forgot all time ;
All seasons and their change, &c. &c. &c.

The book opened at these lines ; his countenance was quite convulsed, as he approached me. He entered the parlour without the least ceremony. " For God's sake, young gentlewoman, tell me, by what means this book came into your hands ? " His looks terrified me. I replied, it was from a person that had been once my friend ; but I esteemed it no longer. He recollected my voice ; seized me wildly by the arm—gazed a moment upon me, and fell into a chair. " Oh, Lucy ! cried he, do I find thee then ? Oh ! cursed—cursed fate ! But go—let me never again behold the cause of all my miseries." " Cruel man, said I, how dare you thus reproach me for errors, that exist only in your own capricious imagination ? Heaven knows how ardently I have sought to conceal myself from the eyes of a man, who has plunged me into an abyss of woe ! But time, my Lord, has conquered—" I stopped. " I know it has, *thy virtue*. Oh, God ! that that mind, which was once so pure, should be at last polluted ! " " I thank you, Sir (my Lord, I would say) your reproaches are the greatest blessings you could now bestow upon me, as they will totally heal, in my bosom, those wounds your cruelty has planted there. Hear me, my Lord,

for

for the last time that ever we must converse together." He still sat looking upon me, his eyes suffused in tears. I continued, "I forgive you, my Lord; and may heaven forgive you; and may the wife, you have chosen, by her amiable softness render you happy, beyond what your fondest wishes could represent; beyond what it would ever have been in your once loved Lucy's power to have made you! Be witness I owe you no resentment—be happy." I could say no more, and was rushing out of the room. He pulled me back. "Oh, Lucy, Lucy! we might have both been happy; but there is a fate in it. A wife! Oh, heavens! after the instances I have had of your perfidy, my soul recoils at any connection with your sex. Never, never, for thy sake, unhappy girl! will I yield myself another's; a false report has reached you." I felt a joy at his words, which, for a moment, I could not account for; I was glad he was not married, though all connections were dissolved between us. He smiled disdainfully upon me; he endeavoured to suppress sighs, but they would rise. He clasped his hands in an agony; he arose to retire; then sat down again. "My God! exclaimed he, I cannot bear it. Mrs. Bellamy, for so I think you are called, why do you not introduce your Mr. Bellamy to me?" "Fatal necessity, my Lord, obliged me to assume that name, to conceal the name of Walbrook from *one* of those who sought

saught my ruin, from Sir George Barclay."

"How, said he, ironically, how could he seek your ruin? it is now too late. Oh, Lucy! a virtue once subdued—"

I burst into tears; I wept aloud; I was quite distracted at his cruel reproaches; after a minute, I wiped my eyes, choaked down my sighs, arose, and took his hand; he started from me. "Nay, fly me not, my Lord, for I will be heard; I will not detain you long. Here will I hold you, till you openly point out to me my errors, till you acquaint me with the reasons for the cruel, the unmerited reproaches, you have thrown out against me. Oh, Sir! think what a heart, alive to every virtuous sensation, must feel, to be loaded with the epithets of ruined and abandoned! that I *am abandoned* is most certain; that my peace is ruined for ever, is as certain; but I bless God, that, amidst all my sorrows, my heart is uncontaminated by guilt. Could it have been subdued, splendour would now surround me: but know, my Lord, that my little shop has more charms for me, than a court would have, were I the wretch you suppose me. Nay, look upon me and answer me (for he had turned aside his head) do not hesitate; I am prepared." He was still silent. He looked upon me; the tears, I suppose, of compassion, dropped from his eye; he caught me in his arms, then pushed me from him; he held me at some distance, and as he surveyed

veyed me, sighed heavily. "Lucy! said he, why would you urge me to utter truths you know but too well? Are you so lost to delicacy, as to wish me to give a detail of the guilty commerce, in which you have lived?"

I interrupted him with spirit. "I have done, I will urge you no more. May heaven forgive me every deviation I have made from the paths of virtue! I have one favour still to beg, and on my knees, I entreat it, as all the friends I have left are interested in it; let this story, of my shame be treasured in your breast; if my conduct *has* been indiscreet, it has been, for these last eighteen months, such as has acquired me the reputation of a virtuous woman; should you now publish the contrary, the many who have encouraged my industry, would fly from me; my friend, Mrs. Bellamy, and her little boy, would suffer from it, as they have little dependance, besides my shop. Promise me then, my Lord, you will not further seek to distress me; 'tis the last and only favour I ever will ask you; nor will I rise from this posture, till you promise to grant me this request." He again snatched me to his bosom. "Oh, Lucy! you have undone me." He darted a look of inexpressible anguish upon me, snatched up his hat, and, in a moment, was out of the house.

Mrs. Bellamy found me overwhelmed in a flood of sorrow. I attempted to tell her my story, but could not; from some hints,

dropped, she guessed the rest. Susan was in an agony of joy, when she heard he had been here, not doubting but all would soon be made up : but, my dear Patty, it is too late : the man, who can suspect my virtue, and openly reproach me with crimes my nature shudders to think of, shall never be the husband of

LUCY WALBROOK.

P. S. His title of Lord Westbrook did not immediately strike me, but I soon recollected that it must arise from the death of his uncle.

L E T T E R XLII.

LORD WESTBROOK TO CHARLES LEWSUM, Esq.

OH, Charles ! I was surely born the child of sorrow. In the person of a little millener, I have recognized my once virtuous Lucy ; but even to thee, Lewsum, the best of friends, I have never yet acknowledged the unfortunate scene, that will embitter every hour of my life. I will tell thee then ; but let not thy wife ever learn the story of her fallen friend.

You may remember that I wrote to you on the eve of my intended nuptials ; the company separated soon after for the night. I went to my apartment which was at the end of a long gallery ; my Lucy's chamber
was

was at the other extremity. I had not been long in it, before I heard her gently step along; I softly opened my door to take a last look, I had but just saw her as she entered it: but in a moment afterwards, I beheld a sight that froze my blood, Captain Hartley cross the gallery and tap at the door; hell and fury, Charles! he was admitted! He had on a nightcap, over which he wore his hat; he appeared no more. I heard, but indistinctly, several exclamations that came from the dissembling maid. I waited, in expectation of his return, for more than three hours; but, Lewsum, every hope was blasted—horror seized me. I was, more than once, tempted to rush in upon them, and with my sword put an end to their guilty joys; but indignation restrained me. I thought them beneath my vengeance.

You, and your Fanny, on your return from France, six months after, found me in my solitude, in a state of despair, equal to what I experienced the first moment I became acquainted with my ruin. My father and my uncle rest in their graves, ignorant of the cause of my distress: the death of the latter gives me a title, and an increase to a fortune that was before an affluent one. But what, my friend, what can restore peace to a wounded mind?

But, to return to my story: Lady Betty Garton saw me, from a shop, where she and several others were making purchases of female

male ornaments, and invited me in; they likewise prevailed on me, to do the same, though my heart was not disposed to trifle. They desired me to look at some ruffles; they were presented me by my once-adored Lucy. I never deigned to cast a look upon her; from the moment I entered the shop, my spirits were overwhelmed too with an unusual gloom. The ladies left the shop soon after. I went out with them, but returned soon after for my pocket-book. I met the humbled Lucy, attending another lady to her chariot, with a small parcel in her hand: this person of dignity was no other than Mrs. Collins; the sight of her renewed my troubles. I asked her name of the still-unknown Lucy; but received no satisfactory answer. She afterwards disappeared, leaving me alone. On her window lay a book, that had been once mine; curiosity urged me to learn by what means it came there: without any introduction, I entered the parlour, and there, Lewsum, I soon discovered 'twas she—my Lucy! How my heart bled, at the remembrance of her falshood! Yet the act of humiliation she had shewn to Collins, made me, for a moment, forget she was guilty, I clasped her in my arms; I threw her from me, in the same moment, as a plague. She had learned I was married—she discovered a beam of joy, when she was undeceived. Lewsum, she kneeled at my feet, to learn her crime; I spurned the Syren from me. I loaded her
with

with the most bitter reproaches—She bore them meekly—from guilt, conscious guilt, no doubt. I hope her penitence will wash out her shame,—which she urged me not to divulge. My promise is given her—but it is unnecessarily extorted: the man, who has adored as I have, can never expose the object of his love to ignominy.

Never, my dear Charles, was sorrow so acute as mine, since my interview with her. This morning I have learned what a pattern of piety and discretion she is: her assumed name is Bellamy, borrowed of the gentlewoman with whom she is connected; her dress so plain, such an elegant simplicity dwelt about her, that not an angel could have suspected the impurity that dwelt in her heart. I am overwhelmed with despair. This last interview has given a blow to my heart, which has again rendered me the most forlorn of men.

Adieu!

WESTBROOK.

P. S. If I do not see you here within three days, meet me at Ashly.

L E T T E R XLIII.

SIR GEORGE BARCLAY TO LORD
WESTBROOK.

London.

My Lord,
THAT the very devils believe and tremble, my heart will not now dispute.
The

The approaches of death have opened my eyes, and shewn me the beauty of holiness when, alas! I fear it is too late; can the mercy of an unacknowledged deity extend to a reviler, a blasphemer, a murderer? No, my Lord, it is too late; the fiends already exult in their accomplished triumph over the wretched Barclay. Where shall I fly, even for a moment, from the worm that never dies?

What shall I say, when I am ushered into the presence of the Sovereign of the universe? when he shall demand of me, whether I have acquitted myself with that honour and justice, that truth and integrity, that piety and benevolence, due from a creature formed by his almighty hand?

How can I answer?

Depart from me, thou wretch accursed! will be the dreadful denunciation.

You, my Lord, have studied those sacred truths, that I have impiously reviled.

But should my life be spared, could prayer, could penitence, could tears atone for crimes like mine, I would humbly hope that the gates of mercy will not be shut against me: but there is no hope—no hope, my Lord, neither can you wish it me, when I tell you I have been the base destroyer of your peace.

Ever since the first attack of my disorder (and dangerously ill I am) I have had you sought in vain; your fancied injuries made you, for so many months together, secrete
yourself

yourself from the world in your retirement. I doubt not your heart dropped blood, and I the accursed cause of it! On the recent death of Lord Westbrook, you came to town; I sent there; you were going to Ashly: but, before my messenger could reach it, you were departed thence, your servants know not whither; and only three days ago I learned you was at B—, where I hope this confession of my guilt will find you. May your health be restored you, is my ardent wish; but ah! I fear it never can, till I can restore to your affections the best of women, the amiable Miss Walbrook. She is innocent, my Lord, pure as the drooping lilly she resembles. The supposed happy lover, the injured Hartley, was personated by Lady Crawford's woman, who served her commands and mine too faithfully. She was habited in an uniform of his, which she took from his chest; the part was too well acted, for you to discover the cheat; she generally slept in a closet within Miss Walbrook's apartment, which was the reason you saw her not return; your behaviour thereupon answered our wishes.

Should you, my Lord, ever learn the miseries that pursued the charming woman, when she found herself bereft of the lord of her heart, let your complaints break forth in execrations against me; yet can they never be adequate to those I hourly heap on myself. In her uncle she lost her last surviving friend; his days were numbered before he could make
any

any provision for her. Poverty, perhaps may have come upon her in her retirement. My hated appearance at Woodbury, when she was but recovering from a dangerous illness which your absence had thrown her into, obliged the almost-dying maid, at midnight, to withdraw herself; since which, all my enquires have not been able to procure the least intelligence of her. Her virtue, let me again assure you, is pure and untainted. Should fortune ever restore her to me, I would, on my knees, present her to you, although the pangs of death were upon me.

The length of my epistle has exhausted my strength, so that I can add no more but to entreat your forgiveness of the vilest of men

GEORGE BARCLAY.

L E T T E R XLIV.

Miss WALBROOK. to Miss. SOMERS.

FOR two days, my dear Pattry, I saw not Lord Westbrook. I had passed the hours, strengthening my heart with indifference and indignation, and armed it against all future attacks, should I again behold him. On the morning of the third day, as I was sitting at work in my shop, he entered: horror agitated every feature; he seized me by the arm, and attempted to lead me to the parlour; he made an effort to speak, but could not; his lips were black and convulsed; his eyes full
of

of wildness. I was too much alarmed to oppose entering with him, or to speak; he led me to a chair and fell at my feet; he gazed upon me in speechless agony; his head sunk upon my lap; his eyes closed; he ceased to breathe.—I called for help; none came—I attempted to raise him—His eyes opened; he sighed. “Lucy.” said he, and paused—“Do not look thus tenderly upon *me*, the vilest of men—the cruel censurer of thy fair fame.” “Cease, my Lord, said I, Oh! cease these self-reproaches, I am unworthy of the least regard; I even wish not now to be justified in your opinion; misery and I have long been friends, nor will we now be parted.” “Here, read, said he, this dreadful scrole (giving me a letter) and pity the errors I have been led into.”

I took it from him, it was signed, Barclay, as you will read from an inclosed copy of it. He walked up and down the room, whilst I attempted to read it; it was moistened by my tears. I presented it to him; “I bless God, said I, for its contents, as, perhaps, it will serve not only to justify me in your opinion, but in theirs, to whom my shame has been reported. I well remember every circumstance of that fatal night; a joyful night I ought rather to call it, as it separated me from the man who could condemn me to shame, and infamy, without troubling himself to make the least enquiry into the cause; appearances were against me; but, had you not industriously

ously sought a means to dissolve the intended union, or had you really loved me, would you not have attempted to have snatched me from dishonour? A very little trouble, my Lord, would have sufficed—" Ah, Lucy! interrupted he, why these killing reproaches? If I *really* loved—Oh heavens! was not every moment of my life devoted to you? If *you* have suffered—I have suffered more—But to recount my miseries to you, would avail me nothing. Can you, dearest Lucy, be insensible to my distress? will you not, by a generous pardon, relieve my heart? I cannot long support the anguish by which it is torn; if your kind forgiveness should be given, let it be while I have life to thank you; here, on my knees I ask it, nor ever will I rise until you bid me rise—to life—to love—to happiness." "I do bid you rise, then, my Lord; to procure yours I would sacrifice my own happiness, my life—let love, if you wish it, crown every hour with an increase of felicity; may the woman be such as will do honour to your merit! but Lucy Walbrook never can be that woman; never will she be again the sport of capricious fortune. My ruined reputation renders me unfit to enjoy the honour to which you now, convinced of my innocence, would raise me. I am firm in my determination, it is not now to be changed. I covet not splendor; my little means of livelihood, if heaven continues to bless my industry, will afford me all that my heart (after the

the humiliations I have undergone) will ever aspire to."

He laid his hand on my lips, "Stop, cruel woman! nor aggravate my distresses by a continuation of your cruel resolves. Is this all the return you make for the purest, the tenderest flame, that ever warmed a manly bosom? My heart has never ceased, a moment, being yours. I was cruelly deceived, my passion nevertheless was fervent. I tore myself from you. Many months I remained secluded from the world and every friendly eye; my life was, for a long time, despaired of; my father's illness recalled me from my solitude; the sight of my friends was painful to me, they renewed my sorrows. My fame had suffered, the cause of the separation fell entirely upon myself; to your dear Fanny, now Mrs. Lewsum, I acknowledged the fault to be mine; your reputation, dearest Lucy, slander has never dared to taint. What I had seen on that unhappy night, I bore the remembrance of in my own breast. Oh! speak then, dearest of women, and let the sound of your forgiveness vibrate on my soul! your rejection I cannot, will not bear." I was silent. "It is too late then"—He started from me. "There is a way—it shall be tried—Adieu!"

The firmness of his looks terrified me—my blood was chilled—my pulse ceased to beat—I fell senseless on the floor. When I recovered I found myself in his arms; my cheeks were wet with his tears; he strained me to
his

his throbbing bosom ; he kissed my forehead, my lips, my hands alternately. I sighed ; I endeavoured to get from him, but he held me still closer to his breast. " No, my life—my love—my Lucy ! never shall you escape from these arms, till you assure me of your returning love—till you tell me I am forgiven—till you say you will be mine." " Can the favour, returned I, that is extorted, be accounted generous ? Give me my liberty, and I will tell you." I hesitated. " What, my dearest girl, will you tell me ? I cannot bear suspense." " You solicit my returning heart ; alas ! my Lord, it has never ceased being yours nor ever can, whilst you are thus generous—whilst you can thus happily account for your conduct. Here is my hand, if you think it worthy of you, it is yours, and never shall be anothers." He received it in an ecstasy of joy, and fell again at my feet. The sudden tumult of delight, with which we were overwhelmed, kept us both silent for a moment. " Teach me, Heaven, said he, to render myself worthy of so inestimable a blessing !" My heart was not proof against his eloquence, all my sorrows were forgot ; I was happy. My dear Lord Westbrook expressed himself so likewise. He would not leave me that day ; he doubted still my veracity ; alas ! he needed not ; in him was centered all my happiness ; should I then fly him, when he thus presented himself, freed from unjust suspicion ?

Sweetly

Sweetly-engaging and tender was his behaviour, his eyes beamed the joy, his tongue could not utter. "Can it be possible! several times exclaimed he, Speak, my Lucy, do I not dream? Oh, no! this hand, pressing it to his lips, is real, it is my Lucy's. Let this hour, my lovely girl, assure it mine for ever; give me this proof of your affection. Adieu! I will be gone—in half an hour expect me. My friend, Doctor Probit came here with me; let him present me the most invaluable of blessings; we want no ornaments to insure our felicity." "Stop, my Lord, cried I, pray stop."—He interrupted me, "When my dearest love is mine, she may display her fancy in choosing those trifles, the world thinks so essential to constitute domestic happiness; but in no dress will you appear more lovely in my eyes, than you now do in that sweet simplicity, which witnesses at once the purity, the humility, and greatness of your mind." I again would have stopped him, but he was all impatience. He continued; "Your settlements shall be such as my dearest girl shall not refuse to accept; the last are not yet destroyed, but they are now useless, as I have, since they were drawn, met with such an increase of fortune." At last he ceased speaking—he was going.

Mrs. Bellamy saw my distress. "I fear, my Lord, said she, by Miss Walbrook's confusion, she thinks you too precipitate. Speak, Madam,

Madam, am I not right ?” “Indeed you are said I ; excuse me, my Lord ; my mind is yet too weak to go through a ceremony so unexpected.” He appeared quite disappointed, and continued ; “What strength, what courage will be wanting to support you ? is it not to the happy Marchmont you consign yourself ? Let all your timid apprehensions be laid aside, and let the next hour make you mine for ever.” I was obliged to rise, and seize him by the arm. “Stay, my Lord ; return, I beg—(for he was going.) Mrs. Bellamy, I ask your advice ; is not his Lordship indelicate ? Will you not be on my side ? ought he not to be satisfied, when you are a witness, that I tell him, I never can know a joy out of his society ? that as soon as my spirits are recovered I shall no longer refuse to swear obedience to him ?” “My Lord, rejoined Mrs. Bellamy, Miss Walbrook’s reasons are such, that, though they do a momentary violence to your inclination, yet, your excessive tenderness to this dear lady ought to make you comply with.” “Well, returned he, what can’t be helped must, I think, be endured with as much patience as possible ; but you have greatly disappointed my fond hopes. Well then, to console me, relate your adventures, for such I think you may call them, though the recital will be productive of much pain to me, yet I long to hear them ; but, my dear Lucy, treat the share I have had in them with as much lenity
as

as possible, as the wound I have received is scarcely closed."

I obeyed. I spoke warmly in praise of my faithful counsellor Susan. My Lord expressed a desire to see her; the girl said she would give up her life to see him once more. I rang for her. When she appeared, "Susan, said I, are you not glad to see Lord Westbrook; you will not, I hope, be angry with him any longer." My Lord smiled; poor Susan was confounded. "Dear Madam!—Pray my Lord, forgive me! I won't tell a fib, that I won't. To be sure, I have called you a thousand names, and must tell you, I never thought any of them half bad enough, for your being so false-hearted to my lady; and yet she was always angry with me. Once, when I thought my poor dear mistress dying, (his eyes glistened) I would not have been in your place for all the gold in the king's dominions, for I am sure spirits would have haunted me in my bed; and I am sure nobody can be more glad to find you true and constant than I am. So, my Lord, if I have offended, I humbly ask your pardon." He took her by the hand; she seemed frightened. "I love your honesty, Susan, said he, your dear mistress likewise loves you. Have you a sweetheart, Susan?" "No indeed; and indeed my Lord, I never liked your men-folk, and I never knew of any good come to any of us poor bodies that did." "Very well Susan, should you rather accompany your lady

lady to town, or stay at B. (the choice shall be yours) or where ever else you please." "I hope, my Lord, I shall not be parted from my good lady, and I care for nothing else."

"But in case you should chuse to alter your condition, Susan, I will from this day settle a thousand pounds upon you, to reward you, in some measure, for your fidelity and strict attachment to my dear friend." The poor girl, in a transport of honest gratitude, fell on her knees, and invoked a thousand blessings on us.

In this manner did my Lord make every one happy, and Susan retired, sobbing out her thanks. And here let me conclude and assure you that I am, once more your happy, as well as affectionate,

LUCY WALBROOK.

L E T T E R XLV.

Lord WESTBROOK to CHARLES LEWSUM, Esq.

YOU would reproach me, dear, Lewsum, were I to defer a moment acquainting you with the excess of my happiness. If you are not set out before this reaches your house, let me entreat you to hasten your journey. My injured, my lovely Lucy is restored to me; her virtue pure and unspotted. Read Barclay's letter, and see how my credulity has been imposed upon. What miseries have we not both endured in consequence of it!

My

My Lady Crawford, who was one of the vile instigators of so detestable a plot, I have learned from your friend Jack Wellford, is now at Abbeville, tasting the bitter fruits of her crimes. Her person, which was not disagreeable, and her fortune, which was very agreeable, drew about her a croud of admirers. Barclay, when he saw his hopes defeated with my dear girl, laid siege to her; with the unthinking part of the sex, he, by his insinuating address, was ever sure of success. My Lady, unsuspecting his designs, though 'twas no more than she merited, fell a victim to them. She urged him to repair her shame, he was deaf to her complaints; the consequences were of a nature not to be concealed. A young lieutenant was admitted to her toilette, the blood boiled in his warm heart, when he thought of possessing her estate; half-pay, to a man devoted to every fashionable vice, was but a poor resource. His addresses were made with vigour, our widow yielded to them; but alas! he soon discovered that his amiable wife had been beforehand liberal of her favours; he was indelicate enough to publish her infamy, and, whilst she is hiding her shame in retirement, he is rioting on her fortune in town.

My incomparable Lucy seized the earliest opportunity of enquiring after Mr. Hanmer, her Fanny, and my Lewsum. I find she had purposely dropped all correspondence with her friends. To Mr. Hanmer and Mrs. Lewsum she writes herself. Adieu! Yours,

WESTBROOK.

L E T T E R XLVI.

CHARLES LEWSUM, Esq. to Lord WESTBROOK.

London.

JOY to my dear Lord Westbrook! joy to his inimitable Lucy!—My Fanny is in extasies—she would have hurried me out of town instantly. Our good father was unable to express his feelings otherwise than by lifting up his eyes, in silent joy, to that heaven which never fails to assert the cause of the innocent.

I received a card from Dr. C---, requesting me to meet him at Sir George Barclay's, in Pall-Mall. Tho' I could not comprehend the meaning of it, I did not fail the appointment. I went; the Doctor met me at the door. "I cannot, Doctor, said I, avoid expressing my surprise at the invitation you have given me, as all, who know me, must be convinced that any interview with Sir George Barclay must be extremely disagreeable to me: but I have heard from Lord Westbrook of his condition. My friend, notwithstanding Sir George's vile machinations, is in possession of all his hopes."

"Mr. Lewsum, said he, Sir George only wants to see you, to beg your mediation with your injured friends; the sense he has of his errors, I hope, will make atonement for them."

He led me to him. He was sitting in an easy chair, supported by pillows, and had not been in bed for ten nights; a violent cough he has had some months preventing his lying down: In short, his figure filled me with horror---not a trait left of the handsome, gallant Barclay. I took his hand, my resentment subsided.

"At

“At your request, Sir George, I come—”
 “Mr. Lewsum,” said he, in a voice scarcely articulate, “it is hard to die—hard to those, whose lives have been spent in direct opposition to the designs of their existence. I have denied a Supreme Power, Mr. Lewsum; yet, in my conversation, impiously called on him, to witness every trifle I said—and yet Dr. C—tells me, that for the truly penitent there is hope—May the Being, whom I have too late acknowledged, deign to receive the supplications of a wretch, whose crimes are without number! but whose penitence is sincere!—Mercy!—mercy!—mercy!—exclaimed he eagerly—Think you I shall find mercy?—Ye unhappy victims of my vices—ye that my brutality robbed of honour and of life—entreat my pardon at the throne of grace—ye that are living, likewise, whose virtues baffled all my attempts—pray for me!—come, see my contrition, and your revenge will be great indeed. Miss Walbrook!—Mr. Lewsum, how have my diabolical designs blasted all her fair hopes! In my will you will find a trifling bequest for her; ten thousand pounds; I have no relation: it is left in such a manner, if she refuse to accept it, that no other person can receive it.” He paused, for some moments, then continued: “Oh! could I but learn, before the dreadful moment arrives, which shall render me worse than nothing, that they were united, from what a load of guilt would my mind be relieved!” He paused again, and seemed quite spent. “I thank God, Sir George,”
 said.

said I, that I have it in my power to tell you, you are forgiven. Lord Westbrook has seen Miss Walbrook; your letter has convinced him of her innocence." "Gracious Father!" exclaimed he, with clasped hands, "I thank thee!—Bless—Oh, bless them!—and pardon a sinner!—that—that would—but—Oh, Walbrook!—Oh, mercy!"—With a heavy groan, he breathed out his soul.

Thus expired the libertine, the prophane Barclay: a wild kind of enthusiasm diffused itself over his whole countenance; the Doctor and myself dropped a tear at the unhappy spectacle before us. We rang for his servants, and left the house immediately.

The subject has made me grave.

Adieu!

CHARLES LEWSUM.

L E T T E R XLVII.]

LORD WESTBROOK TO CHARLES LEWSUM, Esq.

MAY all Barclay's crimes be forgotten; his penitence only remembered!

Lady Westbrook—Well, what of Lady Westbrook? Lewsum, she is mine—she is my wedded wife; nor can mortality taste a bliss more exquisite than what is now felt by thy—no—no—not thine, but hers eternally,

WESTBROOK.

P. S. I find immoderate joy incapacitates a man from writing, as much as excessive sorrow.

L E T.

L E T T E R XLVIII.

Lady WESTBROOK to Mrs. LEWSUM.

CAN there be happiness expected, my Fanny, with a man of violence and enterprise? Yes; Lord Westbrook is both.

Yesterday morning, about eight o'clock, he called upon me: "You do not love me, Lucy," said he, as he entered. "Not love you, my Lord!" "No: if you did, you would not suffer me to feel a pain, that it was in your power to cure. Such a palpitation at my heart! Lay your hand upon it." "You alarm me, my Lord; pray tell me what I can do for you." He looked very grave. "Indeed, said I, you may command me; you know too well the power you have over me." "Power over you, Miss Walbrook! If I had—But I am very ill; do you not see I am?" He took my hand, put it to his lips. "When shall this hand, continued he, confirm to me the possession of the heart I adore?" "Nay, nay, you said you were very ill." "I am, indeed, past the power of medicine, Miss Walbrook; but this hand will I detain, till you pronounce my cure." "I told you, my Lord, that in eight days I expected Miss Somers; I then consent to acknowledge all obedience to you the first moment I see her; it was a promise we made when girls, to be present at each other's marriage." "Do you not seek to deceive me, Lucy? or, when you see her, will you not attempt to break your word?" "I

will not." "On your honour?" "Trust me." Up he jumped, flew to the door; my eyes followed him, they saw him lead Patty Somers into the parlour. We flew into each others arms, unable to speak for joy after so long a separation; but how she came there, raised my wonder, as it may yours, till you have learnt the means.

Three days ago, my Lord was intreating me to name the day for our marriage: I told him, that if Patty Somers did not arrive within the expected time, I would delay it no longer. He took no notice then, but when he returned to his lodgings, ordered his chaise and four to be got ready whilst he wrote one letter to her father, and another to her, to entreat the favour of her setting off immediately, which she did, and arrived here late last night; he concealed it from me, till he introduced her to me, in order to surprize me, which he did effectually.

But to return to our story. As soon as our joy was a little subsided, my Lord approached me with my cloak. I stared. "Does your indisposition make you delirious, my Lord?" smiling. "It does indeed, my Lucy. Come, my friends, step into the coach, which is at the door; it will conduct us to a physician that is now in waiting to administer balm to my disease, for I am sick of love; in yonder temple, pointing to the church, we shall find him." I drew back; he drew me on. "Nay, my Lord! my Lord, what do you mean?" "Ah Lucy! Lucy! what

what do *you* mean ? Did you not promise, on your honour, that the first moment you beheld this lady, I might *command* you ? but I only *entreat* you, and so, my best love, come on." "But, indeed—indeed, I cannot." For I trembled prodigiously. "Spare me then—but three—two—or one hour—then I will comply." He embraced me tenderly for my compliance. Soon after, breakfast was introduced, of which I was too much hurried to partake. We set out—In fine, my Fanny, the ceremony was performed ; it was an awful one. I flatter myself, I behaved less like a fool, than I thought I should. My dear Lord was all grateful sensibility ; his Lucy participated of his joy. To-morrow, we set off for town, where I hope to embrace the dearest, best of friends ; till then, adieu, my dearest love, and believe me, that next to my dear Lord Westbrook, I am your sincere, and most affectionate

LUCY WESTBROOK.

P. S. I have taken leave of my worthy Mrs. Bellamy, after putting her in possession of the business, and its profits ; and my dear Lord has undertaken to educate and provide for her son. The good woman is all thankfulness.

L E T T E R XLIX.

Mrs. LEWSUM to the Rev. Mr. HANMER.

Westbrook Place.

INDEED, my dear Sir, your commands at our parting were unnecessary, my inclinations

nations so entirely coincide with them. Next to my Lewsum, of whom should I write, or of whom, at my return, shall I converse, but of the most invaluable of friends, of my dear Lord and Lady Westbrook.

I know not any rule which furnishes more exceptions, than that which says, that virtue meets with no reward in this life. None but those, who have known afflictions, like my Lord and his Lucy, can truly enjoy the felicity they now taste. Early prosperity, I have often heard my dear father remark, debilitates the mind, and renders it incapable of subsequent virtue, or a relish for real happiness. Their excellent hearts are replete with piety, humanity, and every christian endowment.

What a contrast is there between the Lord and Lady of Westbrook Place, and those of the same rank in the *beau monde*! their minds, free from guilt, seek not dissipation, to stifle in them the admonitions of the remorse attending those who have not, in their own breasts, that innate purity, which shines with the greater lustre, for the various temptations it has been assailed with.

Were you to behold our dearest Lucy, gratifying the highest luxury a benevolent mind can feel, when, with a liberal hand, she dispenses to the poor and indigent, the blessings she has so recently enjoyed, you would partake that luxury. At her return to her Lord, after any of her charitable excursions, the joy, *he* feels, manifests itself in his eyes; he embraces his lovely wife, then often hurries out
of

of the room, to conceal from us emotions, which make him appear still more amiable.

Lord Westbrook, before he left town, waited on Captain Hartley, who had been, though innocently, the cause of much unhappiness to him. He is lately married to a lady, to whom he has been long engaged. They arrived here about three days ago. Lord Westbrook, unknown to him, has been soliciting a regiment for him, and has the promise of the first vacancy.

You have often heard our Lucy humourously describe a quondam lover of hers, Sir James Pringle; he left Westbrook Place just after we came down; he flew there to pay his compliments of congratulation to our friends, as soon as he came from France, whither he went immediately on his departure from Woodbury. His manners are more coxcombical than ever; his behaviour filled not my Lord with one doubt, or one anxiety, although he would gladly have enlisted himself into my Lady's service, in quality of a *cicis-beo*; he afforded much diversion to this little society, especially to Miss Somers, who had the honour to be distinguished by him, when he found his gallantry had no effect on Lucy; He is really an amusing inoffensive creature.

If in Lucy Walbrook we had room to admire the most unfeigned humility, the most perfect resignation, the most exalted fortitude, the uncommon patience in trials as uncommon; in Lady Westbrook, you may discover, superadded to them, a thousand other excellencies, which her exalted station places in the
most

most conspicuous light; to the meekest humility she adds the dignities becoming her rank.

Lady WESTBROOK in Continuation.

Come to us, my dear and reverend father, your Lucy begs it, in the name of all your children; come, and partake our happiness. My mind, now freed from all its anxieties, will want your kind admonitions, more than ever, to preserve me in humility. Even the best and most beloved of men, who ought to guard my heart from error, is likely to spoil me, by his excessive indulgencies.

Never was mortal so rusticated as this Lord Westbrook; the polite Lewsum has likewise caught the infection. How unpardonable their intrusion, to a lady's library too! "But since you are come, I must tell you I am scribbling a paragraph in our Fanny's letter, to our good Mr. Hanmer; and as you have broken in upon us, I will take advantage of your presence to enforce a request I have just made him."

They are unanimous, my dear Sir; you will not surely resist the *united* entreaties of your Fanny, your Lewsum, your Westbrook, and your Lucy; who all join in the request, that you will be with them as much of your time as the duties of your charge will admit of; let us be but one family; it will, I am sure, be one of love.

Come, and teach us to deserve our felicity, is the earnest wish of

FRANCES LEWSUM. WESTBROOK.

CHARLES LEWSUM. LUCY WESTBROOK.

F I N I S.

